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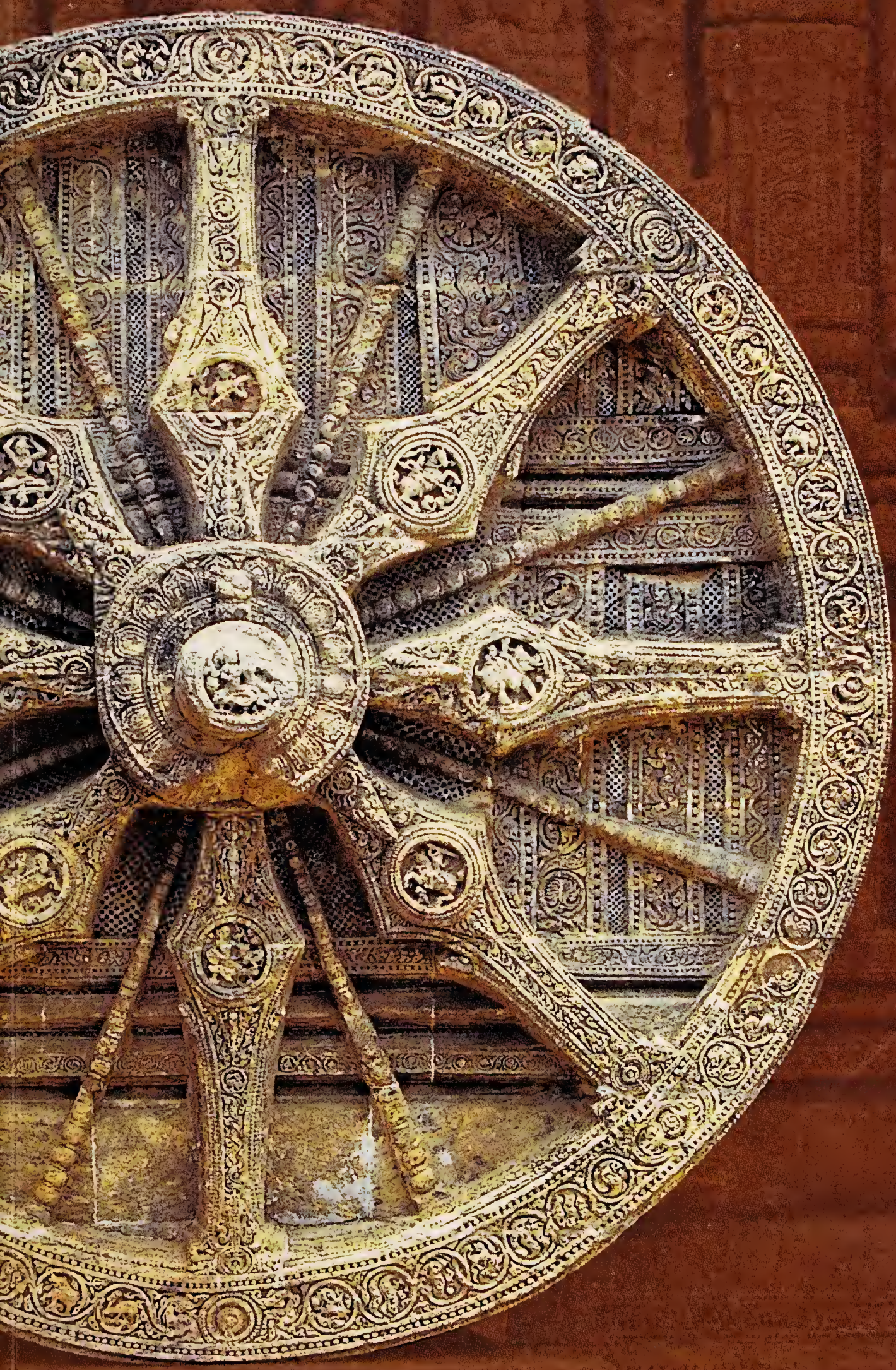
KONARAK



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KONARAK

This guidebook on the Sun Temple of Konarak is part of the World Heritage Series published by the Archaeological Survey of India.

The Sun Temple of Konarak, a monument of vivid architectural imagination, was conceived in the form of a mammoth, twelve-wheeled chariot drawn by seven galloping horses. Dedicated to Surya, the Sun-god, this temple on the coast of Orissa was built in the thirteenth century.

Although the tower of the sanctuary collapsed long ago, the Konarak Sun Temple is still a monument of colossal magnificence. What remains of the Sun Temple is the porch or *jagamohana*, which originally shared a platform with the sanctuary, and the pillared *bhoga-mandapa* in front. The entire structure is covered with a wealth of intricate sculpture which pulsates with life.

There is also a section on the other monuments of Orissa, including Jagannatha Temple at Puri and the temples of Bhubaneswar. A brief Practical Information section gives tourism-related information.

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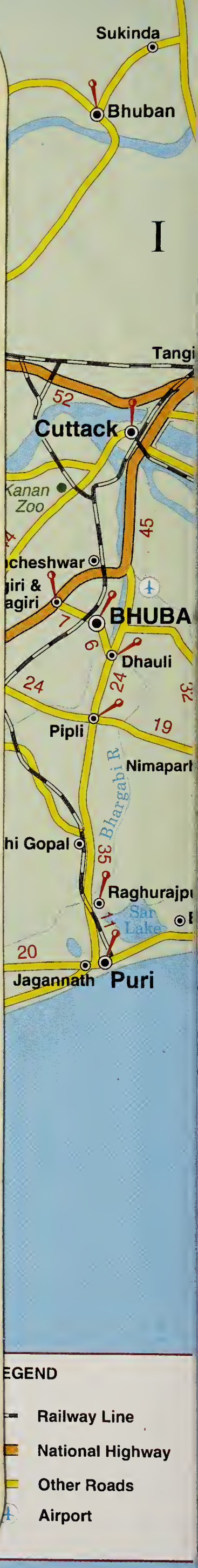

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KONARAK

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Debala Mitra

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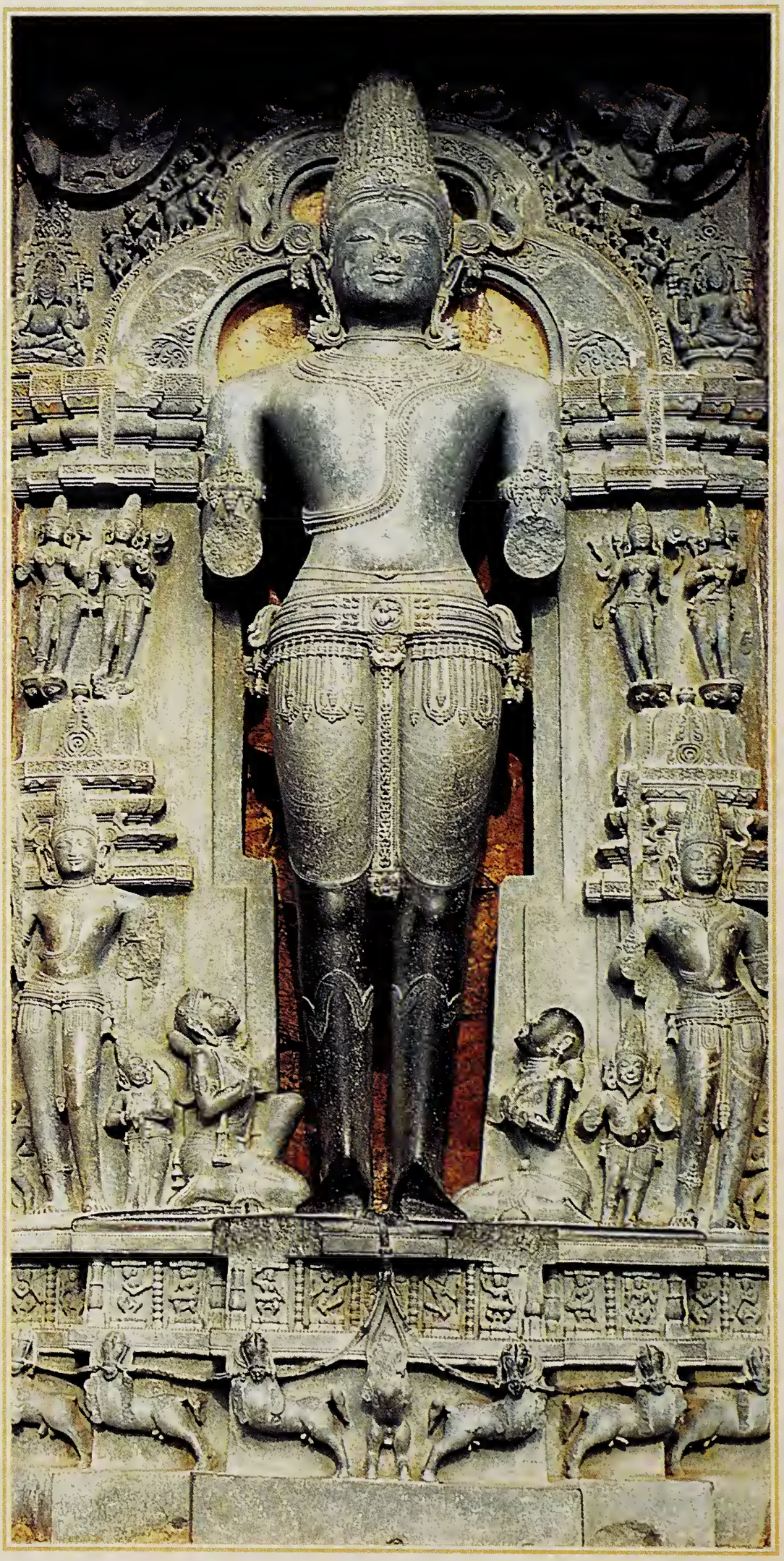
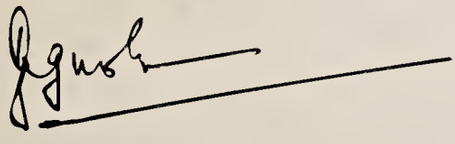


Foreword

The Sun Temple at Konarak represents the most evolved example of the well-defined order of Orissan temples. Erected towards the middle of the thirteenth century by the Eastern Ganga king, Narasimhadeva, it is unrivalled for its unique architecture and exquisite sculptures. The sanctum symbolises the majestic stride of the Sun-god and marks the culmination of the Orissan architectural style.

A number of conservation and improvement programmes are in hand. With the implementation of these programmes, the Konarak Sun Temple complex would be developed into a great hub of activity, incorporating elements of culture, tourism and clean civic life.

Our overall endeavour is to ensure that the tourist to India should get physically invigorated, mentally rejuvenated, culturally enriched and spiritually elevated and, on return to his country, should feel India within him.



JAGMOHAN
Minister for Tourism and Culture
Government of India

Legends & History

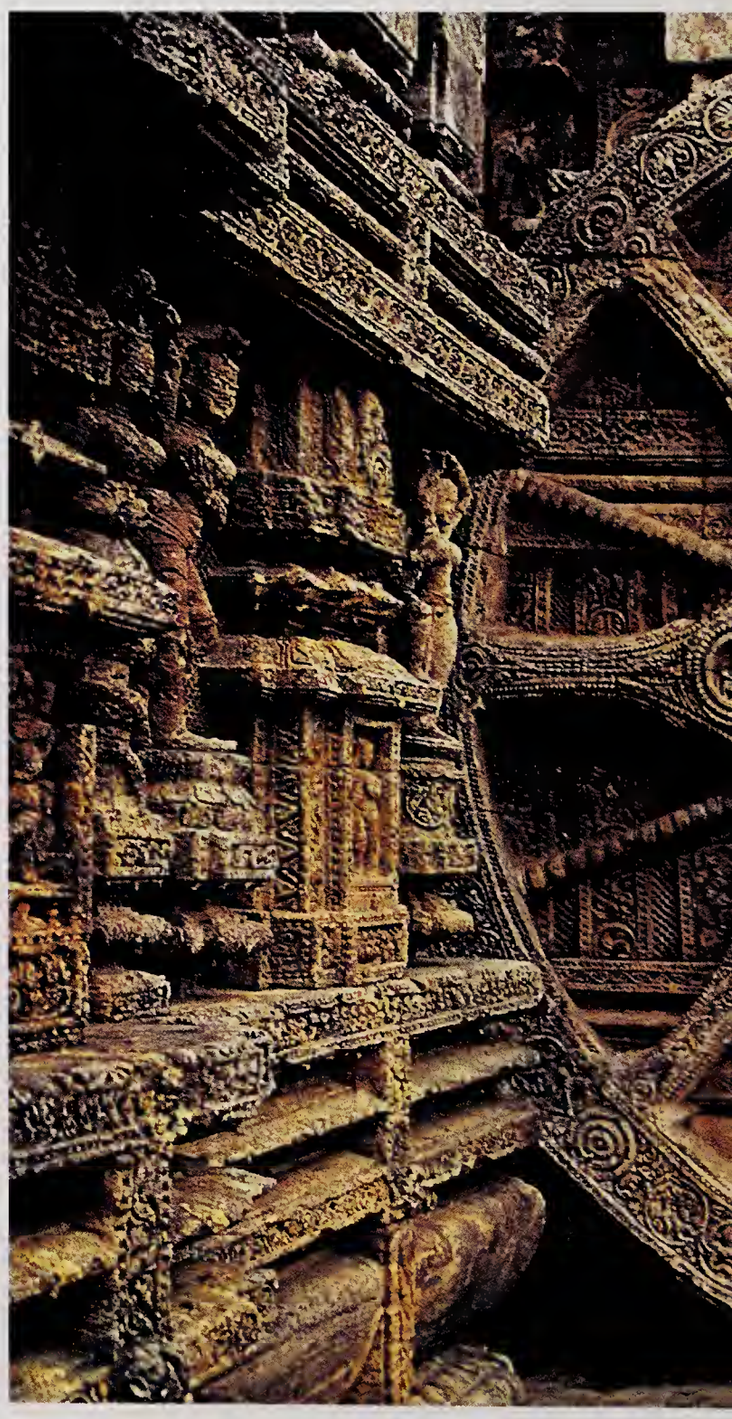
Orissa is famous as the land of many temples. James Fergusson, the nineteenth century archaeologist and art historian, in fact, went to the extent of stating that 'there are more temples now in Orissa than in the rest of Hindostan put together'. And among all of Orissa's hundreds of temples, the one that stands unparalleled in terms of both architectural conception and sculptural brilliance is the great Sun Temple of Konarak.

Even in its present state (it lost its soaring tower long ago), the Sun Temple stands in majestic solitude in the midst of a vast stretch of sand. The stupendous size of this perfectly-proportioned structure is matched by the endless wealth of decoration on its body – from minute patterns in bas-relief, executed with a jeweller's precision, to boldly modelled, free-standing sculptures of an exceptionally large size. Architecture and sculpture formed the intrinsically-linked spokes of the same wheel of the schematic plans of Indian temples; and this process reaches its efflorescence at Konarak.

The name Konarak is evidently derived from the name of the presiding deity, and refers to *arka* or Sun of the *kona* or corner. Early European mariners referred to the Main Temple as the Black Pagoda, as opposed to the White Pagoda (the white-washed temple of Jagannatha, that has very recently been restored, and the white plaster removed) at Puri. Both temples were landmarks on their coastal voyages in the Bay of Bengal.

Ancient Hindu texts take the sanctity of Konarak back to mythical times. *Brahma-Purana* singles out Konaditya (Konarak) as the most sacred place for the worship of Surya in all of Utkala (Orissa).

According to *Bhavishya Purana* and *Samba Purana* and some local texts, the handsome prince Samba, son of Krishna and his wife Jambavati, once got on the wrong side of the sage Narada, who induced him to come to the place where Krishna's several wives were bathing.



He then drew Krishna upon the scene. Krishna, angered by his son's apparent act of impropriety, cursed him, smiting him with leprosy.

Samba proved his innocence, but the curse, once pronounced, could not be withdrawn. So, in a bid to mitigate its effect, Samba was directed to propitiate Surya, the healer of all skin diseases at Mitravana near Chandrabhaga.

After twelve years of severe penance he succeeded in pleasing the god and was cured of his illness. In gratitude, he decided to erect a temple in honour of Surya.

According to *Bhavishya Purana*, Samba had to bring in some Maga families (the Magi sun-worshippers of Iran) from Sakadvipa, as the local Brahmins did not agree to worship the image.

Certain alien features (such as boots) seen in the Surya images are due to the influence of the foreign immigrants that came from Central Asia around the first century AD.

The original locale of the episode was probably on the banks of the Chandrabhaga (the ancient name of the river Chenab, a tributary of the Indus) in Punjab. This spot came to be known after Samba as Mula-Sambapura (or the original Sambapura) identified with modern Multan (now in Pakistan). In fact, the Sun Temple of Multan finds a glowing description in the seventh century accounts of the Chinese traveller, Hiuen Tsang.

The shifting of the legend to Konarak was done when the area became a centre of Sun worship. The motive behind re-locating the legend in Konarak was to enhance the sanctity of the new centre by making it the site of Samba's original temple. A shallow pool, immediately by the sea and within 3 kms of the temple, is known as Chandrabhaga; it is visited even today by pilgrims for a ritual dip.

The *Madala-panji*, the medieval palm-leaf chronicle of Jagannatha Temple at Puri, claims that King Purandara-kesari built a temple to Konarka-deva. The rulers of the Ganga dynasty, who ousted the Kesaris, also paid homage to the deity. Narasimhadeva (1238-64) of the Ganga dynasty erected a temple in front of the earlier one built by Purandara-kesari and installed in it the image of the earlier temple. Several of his descendants also honoured the deity.

After the death of Mukundaraja (1559-68), the *yavanas*, or the Muslims attacked the temple, but failing in the mission, carried away the copper *kalasa* and the crowning *padma-dhvaja*.

The copper-plates of the Ganga dynasty, mention the supreme achievement of Narasimhadeva as the builder of a *mahat-kutira* (literally, great cottage) of Ushnarasmi or Surya in the corner of Trikona.

The site of the temple probably enjoyed religious sanctity from an earlier period or being on the coast, it had commercial importance.

The real purpose of erecting this huge temple is unknown. It is not unlikely that the temple was a worthy act of thanksgiving by the powerful ruler, following either his recovery from disease or the fulfilment of his prayer for a healthy son.

The king's genuine regard for this deity is shown by the name of Narasimhadeva's son, Bhanudeva, the first solar name in that royal line. Some scholars surmise that the monument was erected as a memorial by the ambitious monarch after his successful campaign against Muslim invaders.

The fame of this magnificent temple had spread far beyond the limits of Orissa by the sixteenth century. The great Vaishnava saint, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu (1486-1533) from Bengal visited the Sun Temple while on a pilgrimage to Puri. Abul Fazl, the chronicler of the court of Akbar (1556-1605), paid tribute to its colossal grandeur when he wrote: 'Even those whose judgement is critical and who are difficult to please stand astonished at its sight'.

A number of reasons have been put forth for the possible cause of the collapse of the *sikhara* over the sanctuary of the Main Temple (also referred to as Temple 1). Some ascribe the collapse of the *sikhara* to the subsidence of the foundation, while others speak of an earthquake or lightning; yet others doubt if the temple was ever completed. The general consensus, however, is that the structure crumbled gradually, the beginning of the decay initiated by the desecration of the temple by invaders.

Temple 1 was found to be without its presiding deity when the sanctum was cleared of debris. In the absence of reliable data, speculation has been rife. Some believe that, like the idol of Jagannatha at Puri, this image, too, was made of wood and so perished

after the sanctuary caved in; others believe the Sun-god here was worshipped in the form of a disk; yet others say the temple was never consecrated.

Many others, contend that the enshrined image was removed to Puri probably because Muslim invaders violated the sanctity of the temple either by their entry into it or by the removal of the *dhvaja* and *kalasa*.

Forsaken by the presiding deity, the deserted temple fell into utter neglect. This must have been the main cause of the decay, which was possibly accelerated by the fall of the capping stones.

James Fergusson visited Konarak in 1837 and prepared a drawing of temple. He estimated the height of the portion of the sanctuary still extant to be between 42.67 and 45.72 metres.

Lt Markham Kittoe, curator of the Asiatic Society, came here only a year later. Kittoe wrote that 'one corner is still standing to the height of 80 ft or 100 ft'.

At the time of archaeologist Rajendralala Mitra's visit in 1868, the sanctuary was reduced to 'an enormous mass of stones studded with a few *pipal* trees here and there'.

The lead in despoiling the porch of its facing stones was taken by a raja of neighbouring Khurda, though the locals were also not inactive in removing the fallen stones and taking out the iron cramps and dowels.

'Latterly, some of the finest sculptures from the doorways of the building itself,' notes Fergusson, 'have been removed by the

Kurdah Raja to decorate a temple he is building in his own fort; and the temple itself had a narrow escape from being employed to build a lighthouse'.

In the eighteenth century, the chlorite Aruna-*stambha* was removed to Puri by the Marathas who planted it in its present site, in front of the temple of Jagannatha.

What remains of the Sun Temple is an empty, breathtakingly beautiful shell of the Jagamohana or porch.

Architecture

The Sun Temple of Konarak, a monument of epic imagination, is the realisation of the creative upsurge that fired the architects of Orissa for over five hundred years, beginning in the seventh century AD. It marked the peak of efflorescence of the Orissan architectural movement and was its brightest moment.

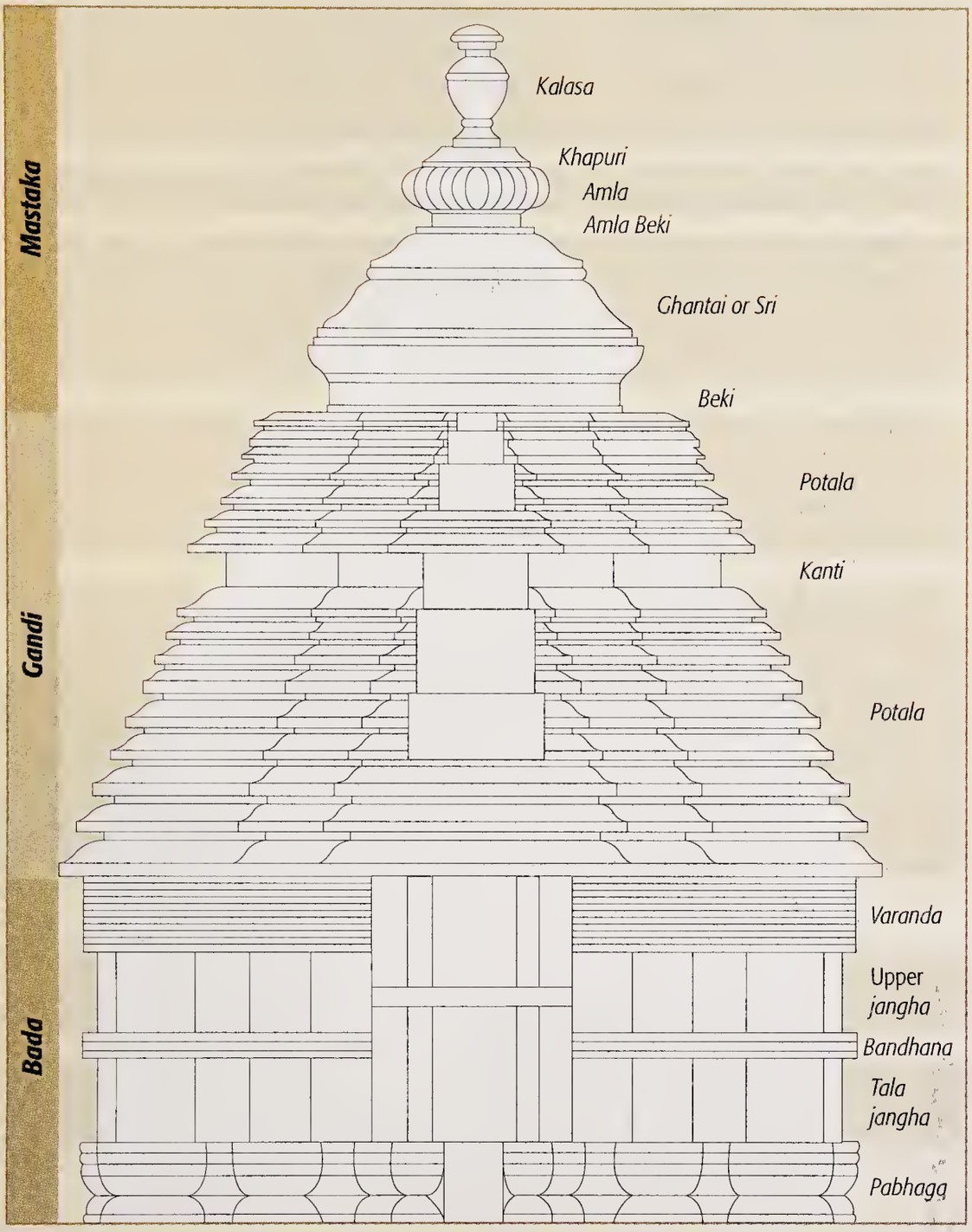
Of the other ancient temples in India dedicated to the Sun-god, the Konarak Temple stands apart, reflecting, in its unique and imaginative character, the accumulated experience of several hundred years of temple building in the Orissan tradition.

The Main Temple was conceived as a colossal chariot with twelve pairs of wheels and drawn by seven richly-caparisoned horses in spirited gallop. The whole edifice seems to symbolise the Sun-god emerging from the depth of the blue expanse.

The lavishly-ornamented wheels of the divine chariot are carved against the sides of the high platform and also on two sides of the east staircase immediately in front of the main entrance to the porch. The rearing horses are sculpted against the sides of this staircase.

The resemblance to a chariot ends with the wheels and horses.

Below:
Sun Temple



Above:
Principal components of a typical Orissan *pidha deul*

The rest of the edifice is a typical Orissan temple, consisting of a *deul* or sanctuary and a *jagamohana* or porch, all built on a monumental scale.

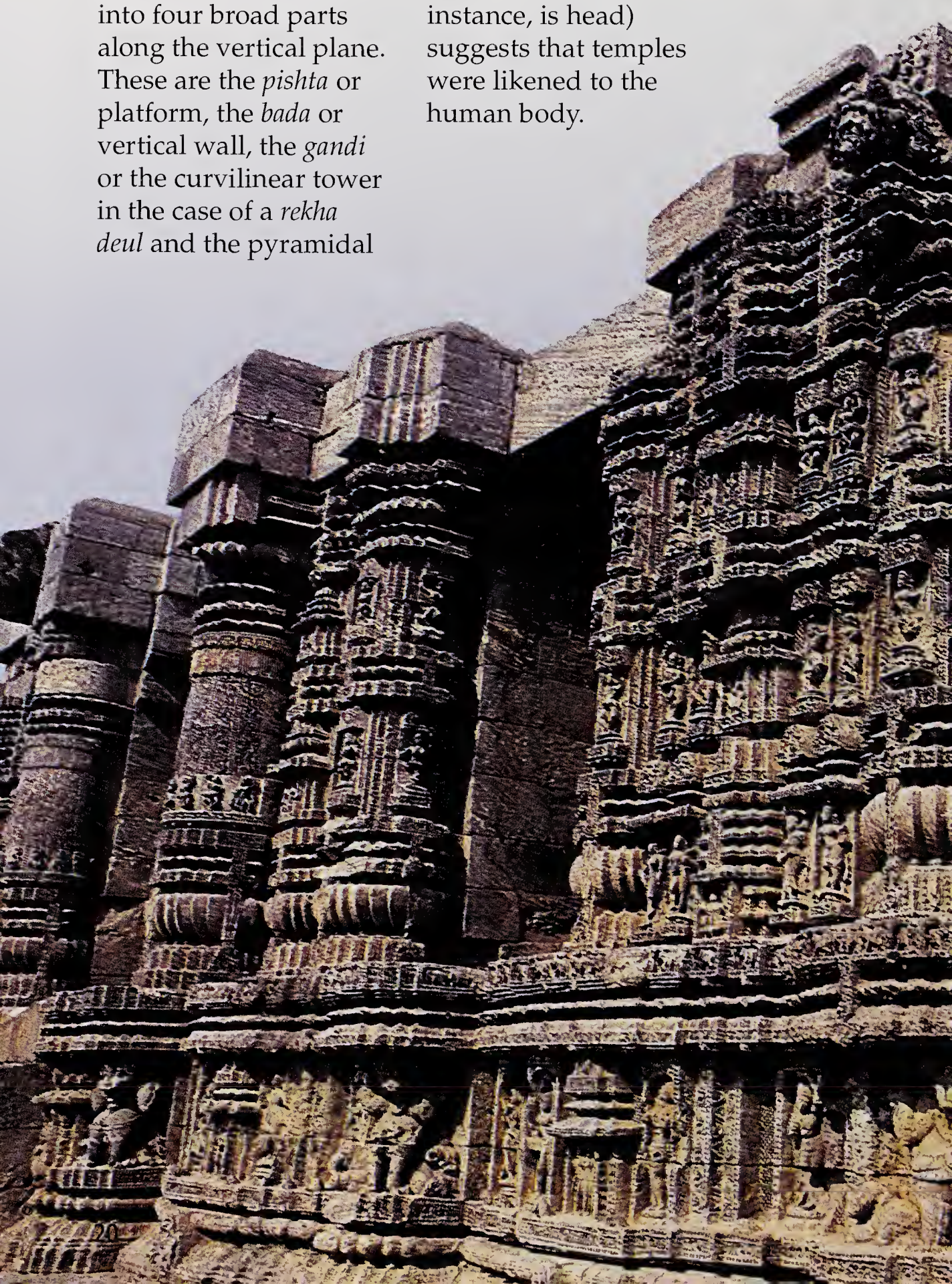
The sanctuary proper is a *rekha deul* or *bada deul* but is no longer extant. A *rekha deul* is characterised by a curvilinear tower, while the front porch called *jagamohana* or *bhadra deul*, where the devotees assemble, is a *pidha deul*, with a roof made of *pidhas* or horizontal stages.

Built on a common platform, both structures are square internally. The exterior, however, is variegated into a *pancha-ratha* plan by projections known in Orissan *Silpa-sastras* or architectural canons as *rathas* or *pagas*. These afford an effective interplay of light and shade.

The central projection, which is the most pronounced, is called *raha* while the next two, both on one plane but projecting beyond the extreme ends or *kanika* or *kanika-paga*, are known as the *anuratha*. Besides these major projections, there are numerous less conspicuous offsets and recesses.

Both the sanctuary and the porch are divided into four broad parts along the vertical plane. These are the *pishta* or platform, the *bada* or vertical wall, the *gandi* or the curvilinear tower in the case of a *rekha deul* and the pyramidal roof in the case of a *pidha deul* and the *mastaka* which is the head or crowning elements. While the *mastaka* is circular in cross-section, the *bada* and *gandi* are square internally in horizontal sections.

All these components are in perfect symphony with one another. The naming of these elements after human limbs (*mastaka*, for instance, is head) suggests that temples were likened to the human body.

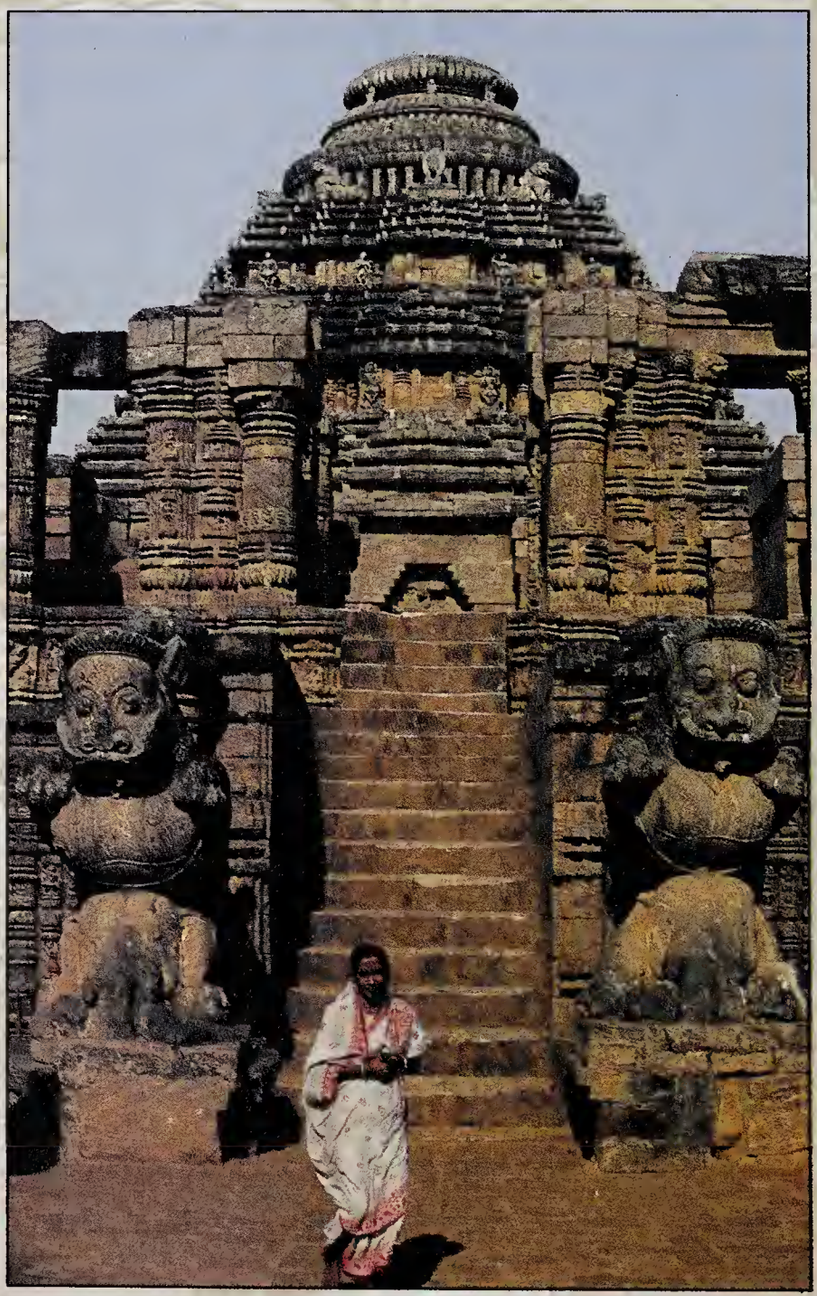


In fact, the Orissan architects have sometimes conceived the *rekha deul* as a male temple and the *pidha deul* as a female one.

Up to the top of the *bada* there is hardly any difference between the sanctuary and the porch except in the relative proportions, but with the *gandi* they assume their individuality. The roof of the porch is in the form of a stepped pyramid, truncated near the top. It is made up of *pidhas* arranged in three tiers, called *potalas*, and separated by a recessed vertical wall called *kanti*.

Over the roof is the *mastaka*, which is a succession of a *beki* or *beka* (neck), *sri* (ribbed bell-shaped member) or *ghanta*, *amla-beki*, *amla* (fluted oblate spheroid resembling an *amalaka* fruit), *khapuri* (skull; flattish bell-shaped member), *kalasa* (water-pot) and *ayudha* (sacred weapon or emblem), the last two now missing. The crowning elements are arranged in such a manner that they complete the shape of the truncated pyramid.

Below:
Bhoga-mandapa



Above:
A water spout

The entire *gandi*, along with a large part of the *bada* of the sanctuary of Temple 1, has fallen and the sanctum is consequently open to the sky. In front of the eastern staircase of the porch or *jagamohana*, is a pillared structure, the *bhoga-mandapa*. The general layout of Konarak Temple is similar to that of Yamesvara Temple of Bhubaneswar.

Three basic rock types were used in the construction of the Sun Temple – chlorite, laterite and khondalite. While the use of chlorite was limited to the door-frames and a few sculptures, laterite was used in the invisible core of the platform and staircases, as well as in the foundation. The rest was built of poor-quality khondalite.

The selection of this easily-weathered garnetiferous felspathic gneiss proved fatal to the monument. What is interesting is that none of these three kinds of stones were available in the vicinity of Konarak. The stones were probably transported long distances by rafts along rivers. The river Chandrabhaga, now dry, possibly served as the last artery of transport. The prodigious blocks of stone were thereafter lifted and set in position at great heights. Historians conjecture that these blocks were raised into position by simple contrivances, like pulleys, wooden wheels or rollers.

The masonry is ashlar. The facing stones were smoothly finished and fitted together so finely that the joints are hardly visible. From some unfinished carvings it is clear that the designs were carved *in situ* after the stones had been fixed in position.

Left:
Eastern steps leading to the *bhoga-mandapa*

Sculptural Art

Left: **Detail of the Sun-god, Surya**

The exterior walls of the Sun Temple at Konarak, from the base of the *upana* to the top of the *gandi* are embellished with an amazing amount of bold sculptures and delicate carvings, transforming the inert stone into an inspired vision of sculptural magnificence. No doubt the artisans 'built like Titans and finished like jewellers'. Despite its richness and exuberance, the sculpture does not dominate the architecture, but serves to emphasise the majesty of the temple.

The themes of the sculptures may broadly be classified into: (i) deities; (ii) musician-nymphs of the celestial spheres; (iii) secular sculptures; (iv) birds, beasts, aquatic animals and mythological figures; (v) architectural motifs, pilasters, mouldings, *chaitya*-windows, trellis, etc., and (vi) purely decorative patterns woven out of floral and geometrical motifs.

Right: **Warrior Pingala, with devotee, part of western *parsva-devata***

The secular sculptures include beautiful *alasa-kanyas* (indolent damsels) vaunting their voluptuous beauty in seductive poses; musicians and dancers; figures of love, both sublime and sensual, in greatly moving forms; and above all, a fairly large number of secular themes. The main theme of the secular sculptures show the king and facets of his daily life both within

and outside the palace, his amusements and his engagements, both temporal and spiritual.

The profusion of the drama of royal hunts and processions and military scenes emphasises the fact that the Sun Temple is the realisation of the dazzling dream of an ambitious and mighty king, secular to the core and with an immense zest for life. The joy of a princely life on earth and expression of the luxury and grandeur prevailing in the royal environment are writ large everywhere. The sculptors were so busy highlighting the myriad facets of royal life that they had very little scope to record the daily life of the common man.

Left & below:
War stallion

Animal figures form the most common theme of decoration. The treatment of animal life is mostly full of sympathy, kinship and affection, reminiscent of the spirit that inspired the early Buddhist monuments at Bharhut and Sanchi.

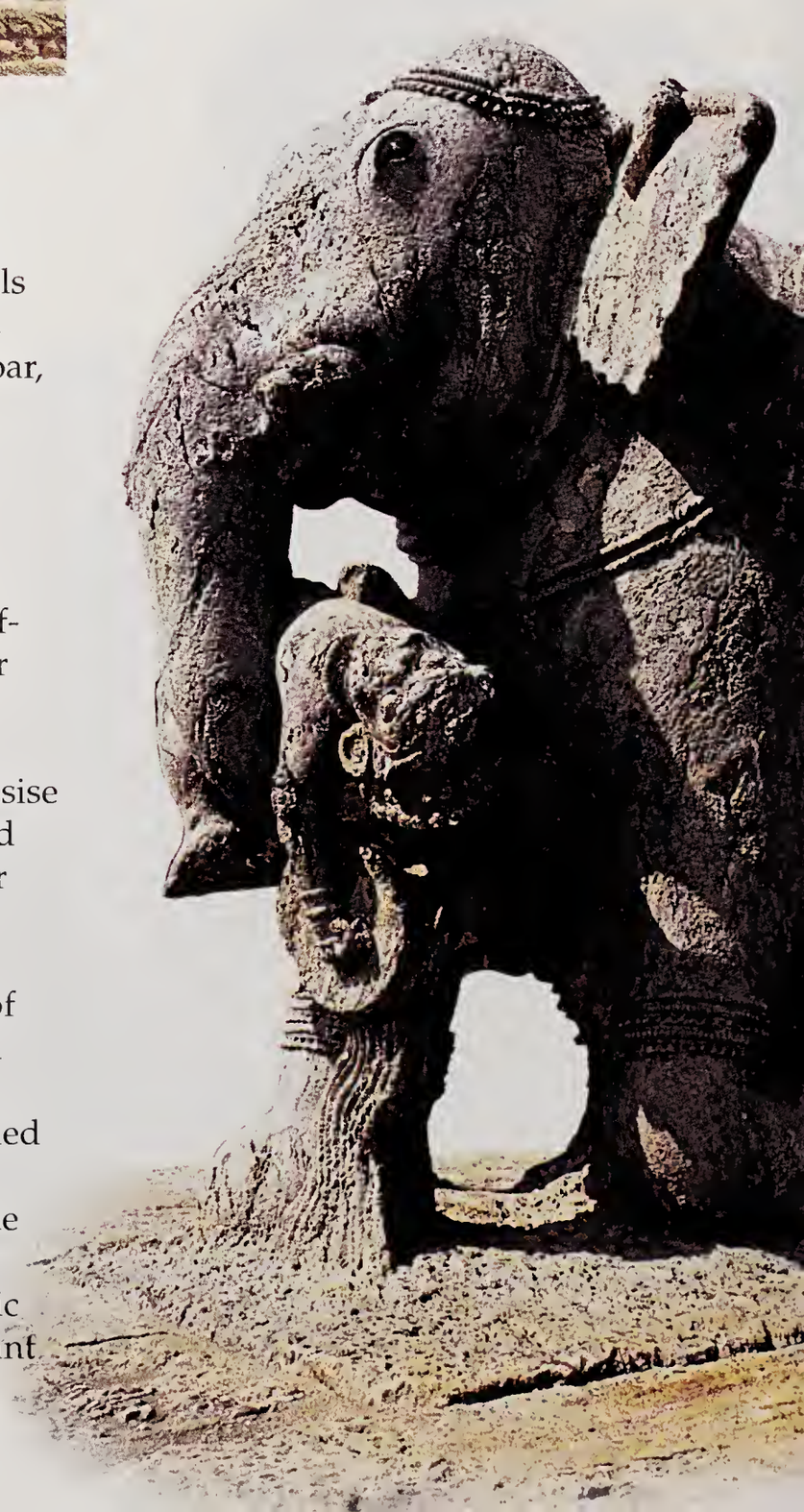
Animals portrayed most commonly are elephants, lions and horses. Other animals also seen are giraffe, camel, deer, tiger, boar, ram, monkey and bullock.

Naga and *nagakanya* figures potrayed as half-human and half-serpent are the other motifs which were primarily used to beautify and emphasise the supernatural and auspicious character of the temple.

The workmanship of the almost life-sized elephants and war-steeds, which guarded the northern and southern stairs of the porch, is of a high calibre. The dramatic vitality and exuberant drive of the horses are as compelling as the plasticity and strength of the elephants.

A connoisseur will find that not all the sculptures are uniformly impressive. A study of the sculptures and reliefs of the Main Temple reveals that there are marked differences both in the style and the artistic quality of various groups of sculptures.

Below:
Enraged elephant



Above:
Elephant frieze

A fact not unnatural, considering that there were hundreds of artists, engaged for several years in finishing this stupendous monument.

In all probability the master-sculptors finished the important sculptures, while the others were left to their pupils and apprentices.

The workmanship ranges from mediocre to excellent. Thus, the free-standing celestial nymphs on the first and second terraces of the porch are superb in execution. Pulsating with the warmth of human emotion, most of these figures exhibit a rare sensitivity.

The fingers of the artist who carved the chlorite *parsva-devatas* were both deft and precise.
The majestic figures, despite their dignified modelling are, however, formal and rigid, probably sculpted in conformity with a canonical formula.

Yet, the sublime smile, expressive of ineffable peace, which plays on the benign face, is touching. Juxtaposed against these are conventionalised figures of men and women carved on the faces of the platform. Evidently, they are the copies of unimaginative apprentices with thin aesthetic vision.

A word is necessary on the flagrantly-erotic sculptures of Konarak, which, by their character, size and number, cannot but fail to draw the attention of the visitor. A strong sensual element is almost ubiquitous in the art of different places and times. To the artist art is amoral.

Apart from Konarak, there are many other temples in Orissa where the frank statement of the most earthly aspects play a prominent part in temple decoration.

There does not seem to exist any canonical injunction on the occurrence of erotic sculptures on temples. No popular explanation (for example, these sculptures being the outcome of a desire to ward off lightning or the evil eye) carries conviction. No less doubtful are such modern pseudo-spiritual explanations as that the sculptures were intended to test the devotees, so that only those who remained psychologically unaffected by them were considered eligible to enter the sanctum sanctorum. Nor can the sculptures be regarded as illustrating the *Kama-sastras* (texts on eroticism) or Tantric practices.

Any plausible explanation must take into account their possible historical development from the simple *mithunas* (amorous couples)

Above:
Panel from *bhoga-mandapa*

occurring on early temples. The artist has impartially depicted all the *rasas* (sentiments)

and has in no way emphasised *sringara* (erotic) over others. In any case, the fact stands out that the sculptor, in interspersing erotic sculptures with divine and other figures, did not give them any preferential or derogatory treatment, and the attitude of the devotee who visited the temple for worship must have been similar. Shocking to the modern eye, the ancients must have accorded sanction to such uninhibited expression of eroticism for some reason or other and taken the manifestations of the primordial impulse in a natural way.

Conservation

Curiously enough, the first suggestion for the conservation of the Sun Temple at Konarak came not from conservationists but from the Marine Board way back in 1806.

The move for repairs arose out of a purely utilitarian motive, as the temple, called the Black Pagoda by European mariners, served as a landmark on the shallow coast of Orissa.

Below:
A sketch of the Sun Temple by James Fergusson, 1837; note the fragment of the sanctuary then extant

A second move, again futile, for repairs cropped up in 1838 when the government was aroused to a sense of its responsibility by the Asiatic Society of Bengal after the demolitions made by the Raja of the neighbouring principality of Khurda.

The only work done till the end of the nineteenth century, besides clearing the jungle, was that the colossal pairs of elephants, horses and lions-on-elephants, which were at that time lying fallen amidst debris, were mounted on masonry platforms in front of the staircases.

Unfortunately they were set in wrong positions, with their faces towards the temple instead of away from it. It was only after the visit of the Lt Governor John Woodburn to Konarak in December 1900, that conservation work began in real earnest. Woodburn realised the urgency of structural repairs to the shattering fabric of the temple. He initiated the launch of a well-planned campaign to save the temple at any cost by adopting suitable measures.

The premises around the temple were cleared of a deep accumulation of sand and stones and the porch or *jagamohana*, on the point of collapse, was given a fresh lease of life by structural repairs.

The extant portion of the sanctuary or *deul* was exposed from under the debris and steps were taken to consolidate it. Within a span of ten years, conservators were able to rescue whatever of this stupendous fabric had survived.

The clearance of sand and stones on three sides of the porch brought to light the superb platform along with horses and wheels and several structures including the pillared hall or *bhoga-mandapa*. These operations thus revealed for the first time that the remains at Konarak comprised not merely a single temple but a whole complex.

Along with clearance was taken up the extremely tough job of conserving the badly shattered *jagamohana*. To prevent its collapse, it was filled in permanently. After repairing the damaged portion of the ceiling, a lining of dry masonry was erected along the interior walls and the remaining space was filled with sand.

The northern and southern doors were sealed and the loose stones were re-set in their original position. The work for conserving the porch was completed in 1905.

The removal of sand and debris from the interior of this edifice revealed not only its true character but also a fine chlorite image of Surya leaning against one of its carved pillars. This image is now in National Museum, New Delhi.

The clearance of debris to the west of the porch also brought to light the existing portion of the sanctuary, the carved platform inside, and a large number of chlorite sculptures. Large-scale plantation of casuarina trees in the direction of the sea was initiated in 1906, to check the advance of the drifting sand and to minimise the damaging effect of the sea winds.

In 1909, the removal of debris behind the sanctuary exposed the extant portion of a beautiful temple, Temple 2 (also called Mayadevi Temple). To the south-west of Temple 2 were found scanty traces of a small brick structure.

Thus, by 1910, the initial task of conservation, incorporating all the items essential for rendering the monument stable, was completed at a cost of nearly a lakh of rupees.

Conservation and maintenance work continued at the monuments and, by 1922, the major structural repair of the sanctuaries of Temples 1 and 2 and the *bhoga-mandapa* were more or less complete. Lightning conductors were also fixed, while a sculpture-shed was constructed in 1915 to house images and important carved pieces recovered from the site.

Since 1939, the Archaeological Survey of India has been doing continuous work at the site. The complete clearance of sand from inside the enclosure has, apart from bringing the compound to its original ground-level, revealed a few features never before suspected – a well pertaining to the kitchen block, the south gateway and a Vaishnava brick temple (Temple 3). Appropriate steps were also taken to preserve Temple 3.

Sand was further removed from the original main entrance or the eastern gateway and the slopes were stabilised by stone pitching.

Above:
Chlorite sculpture, now in ASI Museum

Missing portions of the compound-wall were restored and to stop rainwater collecting and seeping in to the terraces of the porch, all the joints and depressions were filled in with concrete mortar.

Plantation of trees was vigorously pursued which has already minimised the sand drifts and the effects of the salt-laden sea-winds.

The *navagraha* architrave found near the platform of Temple 2 was removed to a new shed beyond the north-east corner of the enclosure.

The practice of besmearing the slab with vermilion and oil has been stopped in the new building. The remaining rear half of the massive *navagraha* architrave has been traced recently. Efforts are being made to fix this part with the original slab.

Subsequently, major conservation work had been carried out in the form of repairing and consolidating the damaged platform, including three staircases existing on the east, north and south sides, besides widening the narrow laterite paved floor around the temple, in accordance with archaeological norms. Apart from these measures, a garden has been developed around the temple. The monument was also subjected to chemical treatment from time to time.

The well-maintained ASI Museum is located a couple of hundred metres away from the Main Temple and is definitely worth visiting.

Open from 10 am to 5 pm. Closed on Fridays.

Sun Temple Complex

The Sun Temple of Konarak was conceived as a chariot drawn by seven galloping horses in keeping with the age-old traditions of Hindu mythology and the cosmic significance of Sun's movement in the sky. The twelve pairs of magnificently carved wheels on this terrestrial chariot stand for the twelve months of the year.

Left:
Massive statues of lions-on-elephants flank the main steps leading to the *bhoga-mandapa*

Sir John Marshall, Director General of Archaeology in India (1902-28) remarks, 'There is no monument of Hindustan, I think, that is at once so stupendous and so perfectly proportioned as the Black Pagoda and none which leaves so deep an impression on the memory'.

The Main Temple of Konarak (hereafter referred to as Temple 1) consists of a sanctuary (*deul*), its attached porch (*jagamohana*) and an isolated pillared edifice (*bhoga-mandapa*).

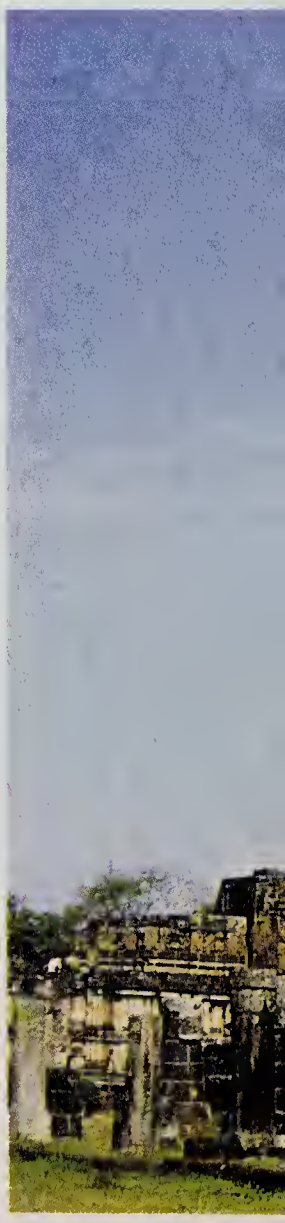
The height of the extant portion of the *jagamohana* from the base to the top is about 39 metres, giving an idea of what the original height of the sanctuary might have been – archaeologists conjecture that it was in the range of 61 metres.

The Konarak temple, even with its main sanctuary having collapsed over a century ago, dominates the landscape for many miles. Erected on an impressive platform, the sanctuary and porch form two components of a cohesive architectural scheme, the whole fabric being designed as the celestial chariot of Surya, the Sun-god.

In Hindu mythology, Surya is believed to course across the sky in a chariot of seven horses. The twelve pairs of wheels symbolise the twelve months of a year and are carved against the three sides of the platform and two sides of the front (east) staircase.

Upana

Upana is the name given to the area below the platform and the staircases of the Orissan temples, with a narrow ledge-like projection. In Temple 1, three broad flights of steps, facing



the north, south and east doors of the porch, lead to the top of the platform.

The façade of the *upana* is richly ornamented with friezes conceived on a magnificent scale and these graphically portray the life of the times.

The one recurring motif on the *upana* is that of elephants: elephants in their sylvan retreats, elephants walking in a single file, elephants uprooting trees, feeding young ones or affectionately fondling their mates. Other scenes show men attempting to capture elephants, as the animal was a prized possession of the ancient nobility.

Another popular theme is that of military processions, consisting of elephants, cavalry and infantry, with the chariot being conspicuously absent. Other depictions include labourers, palanquin bearers and rows of athletes, armed bandits, bullock carts at rest, lady cooking and other household scenes, besides hunting expeditions. Among the animals carved on the *upana*, the presence, on the southern side, of a giraffe, an animal foreign to India, is significant.

Below:
Sun Temple

Platform

The *deul* and *jagamohana* stand on a magnificent platform, over 4 metres high, with its façade richly carved bearing a well-moulded base. The next division corresponds to the lower *jangha* of the *bada* with upright slabs containing miniature

representations of shrines with wagon-vaulted roofs (*khakhara-mundis*) in close succession. In the niches of these *khakhara-mundis* are mainly figures of beautiful women. One of these depicts a touching scene of leave-taking of an old mother, presumably on the eve of her departure on a

pilgrimage. The mother, bent with age, tenderly blesses her son. The daughter-in-law reverentially wipes the dust off her feet, while the grandchild fondly clings to her.

Upright slabs are boldly relieved with various motifs: erotic couples and voluptuous young women flaunting their beauty in various attractive postures. Other frequent motifs are of *nagas* or *nagis*, mythical beings who are depicted with a human bust, a multi-hooded canopy and the tail of a serpent coiled around a pillar and *vyalas* (composite animals).

Below:
The richly carved platform of the Sun Temple

The *bandhana*, the third division contains richly carved mouldings. Further up on the upper *jangha* of the platform are large *pancha-ratha* pilasters that are remarkable for their elaborate compositions. In one of the few surviving reliefs on the southern side is depicted a temple in which are enshrined images of Mahishasuramardini and Jagannatha and a *linga*. These reliefs indicate not only the extension of the royal homage to deities of the Vaishnava, Sakta and Saiva cults, but also the existence of goodwill and a feeling of tolerance that apparently prevailed among the adherents of different sects.

Another interesting relief depicts a king, seated on an elephant, receiving the homage of a group of outlandish men clad in frilled petticoat-like lower garments. Evidently they have brought gifts for the king, one of which includes a giraffe.

In some reliefs an important personage is shown seated on a low stool, delivering a discourse to a group of noblemen or princes' whose mounts – horses and elephants – are shown standing below the pavilion.

The top moulding of the platform contains a row of geese or four-petalled flowers alternating with diamond-shaped flowers, while below it are friezes of marching armies, a row of elephants, provision-carriers and an assemblage before a king with a beaded border below it.

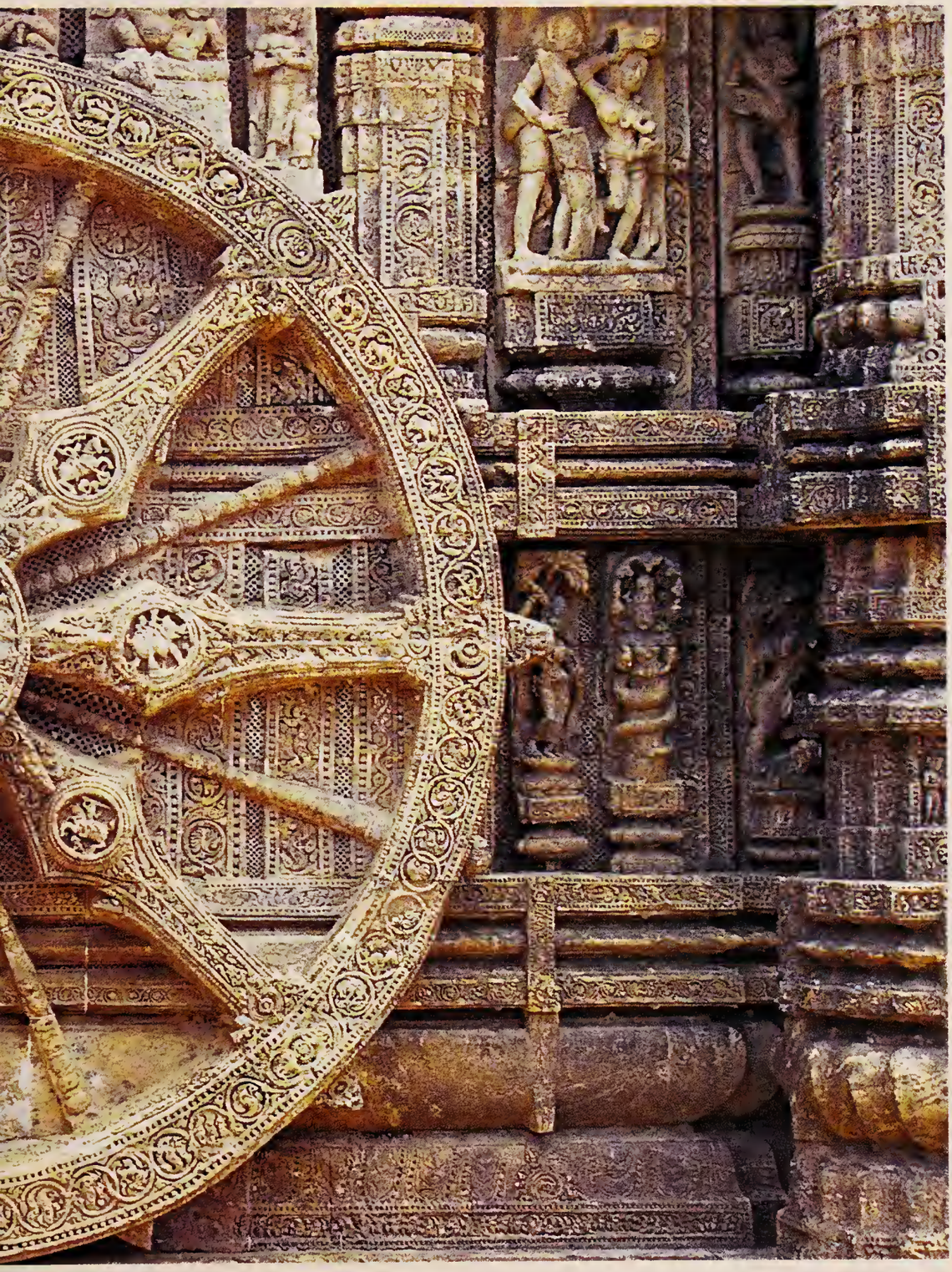
Right and below:
Carved reliefs on the platform

The Wheels

The exquisite wheels of the chariot carved on the face of the *jagamohana* platform are so realistic that they even have an axle kept in position by a pin as it would be in an actual cart or chariot. Historian K S Behera says the magnificent wheels were 'the crowning glory of the temple…which imparts a monumental grandeur unique in the realm of art'.

The hub of the wheel is decorated with beaded rings and a row of lotus-petals; the latter in some wheels have dancers and musicians very rhythmically sculpted. The thin spokes have a row of alternate beads and discs, while the broad spokes broaden further

near the centre where they become roughly diamond-shaped. In the centre are richly carved medallions, containing numerous deities, erotic and amorous figures and *kanyas* in various poses. Similar medallions also occur on the face of the axle. The available ones portray a god in the company of a goddess (probably Siva-Parvati), Krishna playing on a flute amidst cowherds; a king seated on an elephant facing a group of persons seeking mercy.



Above:
The porch or *jagamohana* is the best preserved portion of the Sun Temple

Jagamohana

The *jagamohana* or porch (also called the assembly hall) at Konarak follows the same basic architectural layout as the porches of other developed Orissan temples with a *pancha-ratha* plan. The brilliance of the artist who conceived the Sun Temple lay in juxtaposing the various constituent elements of sculpture and architecture in such a way that it represented a magnificent unified whole.

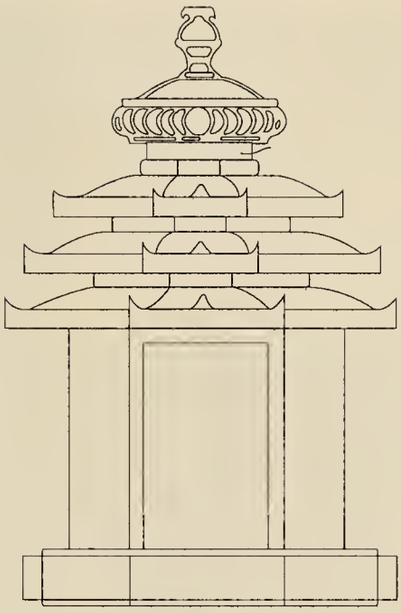
The *jagamohana* is the best preserved structure in the complex. Built on a low *pishta* or platform, the vertical portion of the porch wall (*bada*) has five horizontal divisions. In the conspicuously projected *raha* (middle segment of temple) on the front, north and south sides, are provided doors and steps. The western *raha* provides a passage leading to the door of the sanctum.

The ***pishta*** consists of two mouldings with a honeycombed recess in between. The scroll-work, with animals, flowers and leaves woven within beaded borders on the lowest moulding, is capped at intervals by projected insets relieved with motifs of *chaitya* windows and animals.

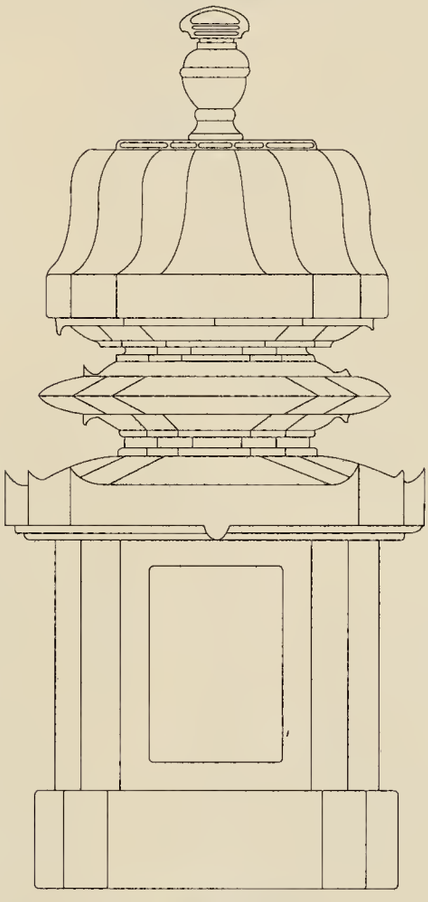
As in all Orissa temples, the ***bada*** of this temple has five divisions – the lowest being the *pabhaga*, followed by lower *jangha*, *bandhana*, upper *jangha* and *varanda*.

Each division is further divided into sets of lavishly carved mouldings set within beaded borders. The mouldings have at intervals ornate *chaitya*-window motifs.

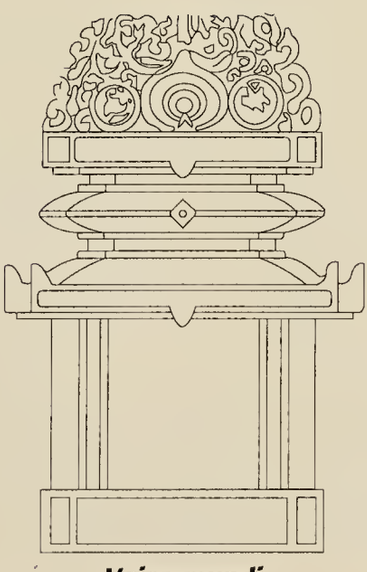
The *khakhara-mundis* or the miniature shrines with wagon-vaulted tops, carved on walls are elaborately composed. In the framed niches of these *mundis* are different compositions. One such is of a seated king, with a small sword in his hand, fronted by two figures, one with a manuscript and the other with a knapsack; a royal cavalier, shooting an arrow at two animals, in the company of a foot-soldier with a shield and sword.



Pidha-mundi



Khakhara-mundi



Vajra-mundi

Higher up on the *bada*, in some of the framed niches were free-standing sculptures, eight of which were *dikpalas* or the guardians of eight quarters: Indra (east), Agni (south-east), Yama (south), Nirriti (south-west), Varuna (west), Vayu (north-west), Kubera (north) and Isana (north-west). Most of these sculptures, which were of chlorite, were removed in the first half of the nineteenth century when there was a greedy hunt for carved chlorite pieces. Among the eleven antiquities donated by P C Mukherjee to the Indian Museum in 1893, there is an inscribed chlorite sculpture, which scholars assume was in one of these framed niches.

As one goes up the *bada*, *pidha-mundis* take the place of the *khakhara-mundis*. Many of these are empty, while others have life-size erotic figures in their niches.

The veneer-stones of the front face of the *rahas* (middle segment of temple having greatest projection) have all but disappeared, except a small section at the base and the top of the north side.

Right:
A chlorite statue, currently in the ASI Museum

Left:
A free-standing figure of a musician

Supported by iron beams, the **architraves** that project from the top of the doorframe were of chlorite with sculptured front faces. The eastern one, originally a monolith, is still at Konarak. The whereabouts of the other two are not known.

The front half of the eastern architrave is now in a shed erected within the complex. It is relieved with nine *grahas* (the sun, the moon and the planets) each within a tiered pavilion. The pacification of the planets (*graha-shanti*) is an essential element of Hindu astrology. Above the *grahas* is the carved frame of an oblong niche that once contained a seated image of Surya.

Below:
The *navagraha* panel from the main door-frame of the Sun Temple is now under active worship

Of the **doorframes**, the one on the east is the best preserved, while the one on the north is partially preserved but still in position. Made of chlorite, these luxuriantly carved frames are similar in composition and execution.

The eastern door-jamb is divided into eight facets, all on different planes, the innermost being the most receding and the outermost the most projected. The facets bear reliefs of foliated leaves, the double coil of a hooded *naga* couple, and a vertical succession of miniature pavilions with *vajra-mundis* (a variant of the *khakhara-mundis*) containing figures, amorous in nature.

The motifs on the facets, except the topmost, stop at the central part of the lintel that is divided into a succession of niches. In the lowest niche is an image of Lakshmi, the goddess of plenty, being bathed by a pair of elephants, each standing on a blooming lotus.

Another niche depicts a bearded figure deep in meditation under a *torana*, the latter flanked by a *makara*, a mythical animal with the head of a crocodile and the body of a fish.

The stepped pyramid of the temple roof, above the vertical wall is called the ***gandi***. It is in three gradually receding tiers (*potalas*), each tier separated from the other by a prominently recessed vertical wall (*kanti*).

The *kanti* above the first and second tiers are relieved with *khakhara-mundis*, *kanyas* and pilasters. The vertical faces of the bottom and second tiers present minutely carved friezes depicting processions, in which elephants and the army – both infantry and cavalry – are the most conspicuous themes.

In the lowest recessed wall are 16 *kanyas*. Gracefully poised, they are variously engaged in adjusting their ornaments, wringing wet hair, or allowing a pet bird to drink the drops of water falling from their hair, and are mostly displayed in a variety of alluring and seductive postures.

These seductive figures, some strangely in sandals, have fascinated generations of tourists. Above the bottom tier, at either end, is a six-armed, four-headed, life-sized dancing figure of Bhairava with an ferocious expression, teeth bared in a snarl and a garland of skulls around his neck.

Left:
Figure of Martand Bhairava on *jagamohana*

Below:
A processional frieze

Juxtaposed against these grim-looking figures are the beauteous, life-sized images of female musicians. These boldly-carved, vivacious but dignified celestial choristers with their pliable plasticity and dynamic sweep create an unforgettable fantasy in stone. The instruments of this orchestra give us an indication of the musical instruments popular at the time: *dholak*, *pakhawaj* and a longish, cylindrical drum played upon with sticks, cymbals, *karatala* and the melodious *vina*.

Except for the youthful and serene *vina* player, fully absorbed in the rhythm of the music, all the other musicians are animated by the melodious music and seem to dance in harmony with the measures. The rhythmic actions of the limbs and the delicately tilted heads of some of these figures are unsurpassed in their beauty.

The ***mastaka*** or the crowning element of the temple above the *gandi*, consists of projected bands, a bell-shaped member (*sri* or *ghanta*), *amla* and *khapuri*, while the crowning *kalasa* is missing. The *sri* is divided into two parts by a central band, each part relieved with a row of long petals. It is supported by eight lions, of which four face the intermediate directions. Eight figures, seated on their haunches and with their hands resting on the round, support the *amla* on their backs.

The **interior** of the porch, now inaccessible, is reported to have been plain but plastered. According to Bishan Swarup, the square room, of 18.2 metres dimensions, was divided into a nave and two aisles. However, the ceiling of this room caved in around 1848 and nothing of it was left when the porch was filled up in 1904.

Left & below:
Female musicians

The Sanctuary

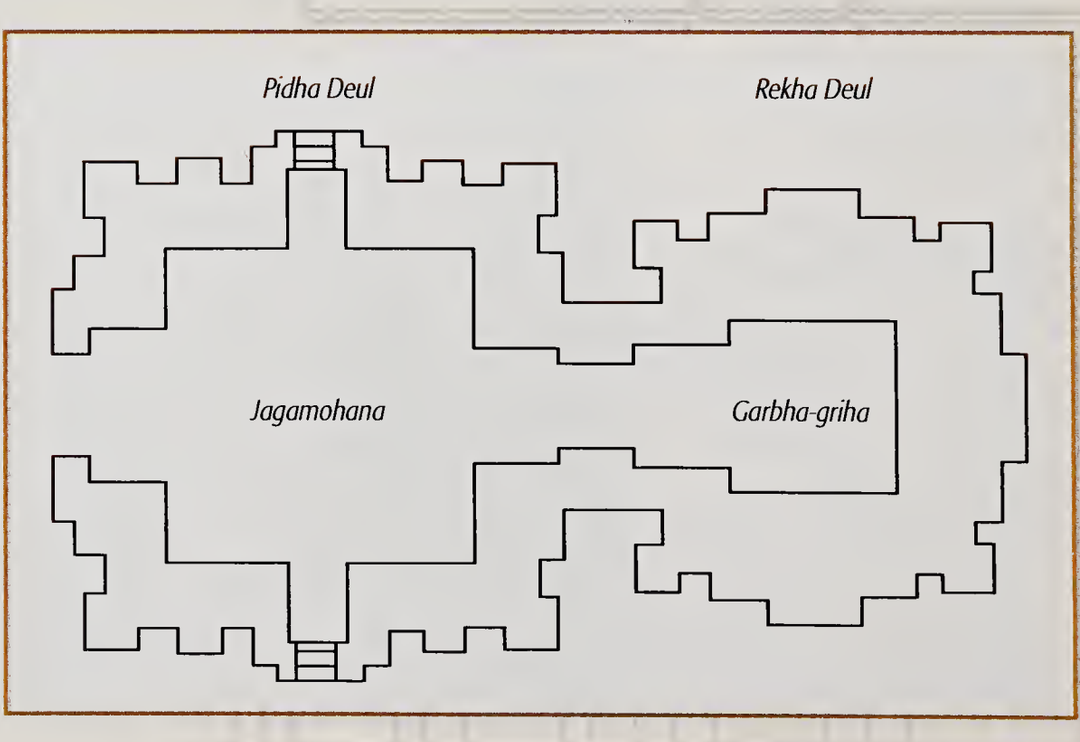
The tall and curvilinear spire or ***sikhara*** of the sanctuary or *deul* along with the upper part of the ***bada*** caved in long ago. But one can still visualise the form of the sanctuary from the extant but smaller temples of Yamesvara and Ananta Vasudeva in Bhubaneswar.

The sculptures on the extant walls of the ***raha*** are distinguished by the exquisite friezes of animals. Particularly remarkable are the life-like boar and the herd of deer on the east face of the south *raha*. The vertical wall of the fallen *deul* is similar to that of the *jagamohana*, only here there are no pilasters or *khakhara-mundis* in the lower levels, thus giving the sanctuary a dignified appearance.

The themes of the niches inside the pavilions, with a single exception where a preacher-like figure is seen seated in meditation, centre on the life of a king in the palace. Thus, in one niche, an armed king is seen fondly regarding his reflection in a mirror; in another he is generously distributing largesse to supplicants; while in a third, he is discoursing before an assemblage; and in another he is shown astride a horse.

The front faces of the *rahas* are covered partly by the double stairs leading to the *parsva-devatas*. In the niches of the *khakhara-mundis* further up the extant wall of the *deul* were once chlorite sculptures, none of them now *in situ*. Eight of these were *dikpalas* placed in the

Below:
Plan of Sun Temple

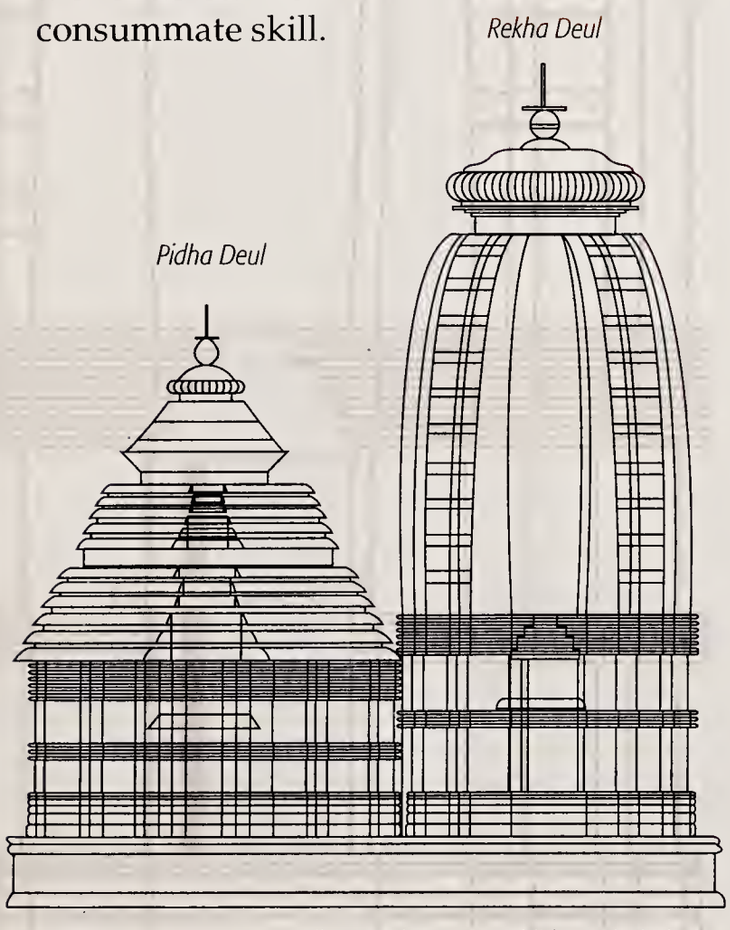


quarters over which they preside. Three of them are now in the ASI Museum, while the fourth, Isana, has been removed to National Museum, New Delhi.

Made of chlorite, none of the ***parsva-devatas***, are within the original framed niches. The walls and roof around them are all modern. Representing Surya, all the *parsva devatas* are sculpted within conventional norms prescribed for images of gods and deities. These sculptures, with their benign and majestic bearing, are superb specimens of contemporary iconographic art. The minute details of the ornaments and decorated drapery are rendered with consummate skill.

Aruna-stambha

A tall, free-standing chlorite pillar or *dhvaja-stambha,* with Aruna, the charioteer of Surya, at its crown, originally stood in front of the eastern staircase of the porch. Of exquisite workmanship and elegant proportion, the Aruna-*stambha* was a fitting appendage to the temple. It now stands in front of the main gate of the temple of Jagannatha at Puri, moved allegedly to prevent its desecration at the hands of Muslim invaders.



Adapted from Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture: Buddhist and Hindu*

The more than life-sized image of Surya in the southern niche stands majestically on a chariot drawn by seven horses, while only the upper torso of Aruna, the charioteer is shown. Draped in a short *dhoti* and with feet covered by long boots, the figure of Surya is heavily bejewelled and even sports a girdle. Among the many ornaments he wears is a necklace with five beaded strings held by a central clasp, armlets, ear-rings and a short crown, all richly embellished.

In his hands are stalks of fully blossomed lotuses, a characteristic attribute of Surya. The arrangement of the coiffure is in the form of a small *stupi*-shaped bun on the crown of the head. Around the head is a carved halo with tongues of flames at the outer edge. At the crown of the halo is a *kirti-mukha* flanked on either side by a flying figure blowing a conch, while around the edges are ten divine dancers all playing on musical instruments.

Right:
The majestic figure of Surya

Delineated below are four standing females, two each on either side of Surya, carrying variously a *chamara*, an offering on a dish-on-stand and a lotus. Near Surya's right foot is the royal donor with folded hands, his sword kept flat on the *ratha*. The kneeling figure near the left foot evidently represents the family-priest of the king. While at the extreme ends are the goddesses of dawn and pre-dawn, Usha and Pratyusha, dispelling darkness by shooting arrows.

The chariot has on its uppermost façade dancers, most of whom are playing musical instruments. The entire sculpture (3.38 metres high, 1.8 metres wide and 71 cm thick), made of a single piece, is installed on a chlorite pedestal, the latter relieved with three richly carved mouldings.

The image of Surya (3.45 metres high, 1.78 metres wide and 76 cm thick) in the western niche is similar in most details to the one on the south, except that here Surya wears a *tilaka* on the forehead and a richly-embellished high crown.

The arrangement of subsidiary figures in the Surya sculpture of the northern niche is roughly the same as in the other two niches. The only points of difference are that here, the king, bearing a *chamara* and a sword, and the priest are both standing, looking at the lord of the sky, as he spans the horizon on a spirited horse. Lavishly bejewelled, Surya wears a high crown and a *tilaka*

A modern flight of steps leads to the top of the extant western wall of the **sanctum sanctorum**. Located in the middle of the western side of the room, the lavishly carved chlorite platform which sustained the pedestal of the presiding deity, is one of the most magnificent of its kind. The recessed middle division, which has a lion-on-elephant at either extremity, is divided into pavilions by pilasters. Inside the

Below:
Side view of main entrance to *bhoga-mandapa*

central pavilion is a kneeling moustached king, evidently the donor of the temple, with folded hands and with a sword, held under his arm, in the company of priests.

The pedestal was found empty when the debris was cleared from the sanctum. The image had been removed, according to the *Madala-panji*, to the precincts of the Jagannatha Temple in Puri. The Virinchi

Temple there has a small image of Surya (called Virinchi) which is claimed by local priests as hailing from Konarak.

The floor of the **passage** leading to the sanctum is paved with chlorite slabs, while the lavishly carved **door-frame** of the passage is made of chlorite. A set of two *pancha-ratha* mouldings projecting from the door-jambs, also made of chlorite, are decorated with luxuriant leaves and connected by a highly ornate *chaitya*-window motif carved on the *raha*.

Below:
The main entrance to the *bhoga-mandapa*

The Colossi

A pair of colossi, two lions, each rampant on a crouching elephant, on the east, two elephants, richly decorated and fully harnessed, on the north and two gorgeously caparisoned war-stallions on the south, originally guarded each of the three staircases of the porch. The animals – masterpieces of Orissan art – were originally mounted on a partly-carved platform. Those on the north and south

sides have been re-installed on new pedestals, a few metres away from their original locations. They now face the porch. The two compositions of the eastern side are now in front of the eastern stairs of the *bhoga-mandapa*. Covered with plaster, these animals were originally coloured dark-red, patches of which can still be seen. One of the lions-on-elephants was still in its position till 1838, when Lt Kittoe sketched it.

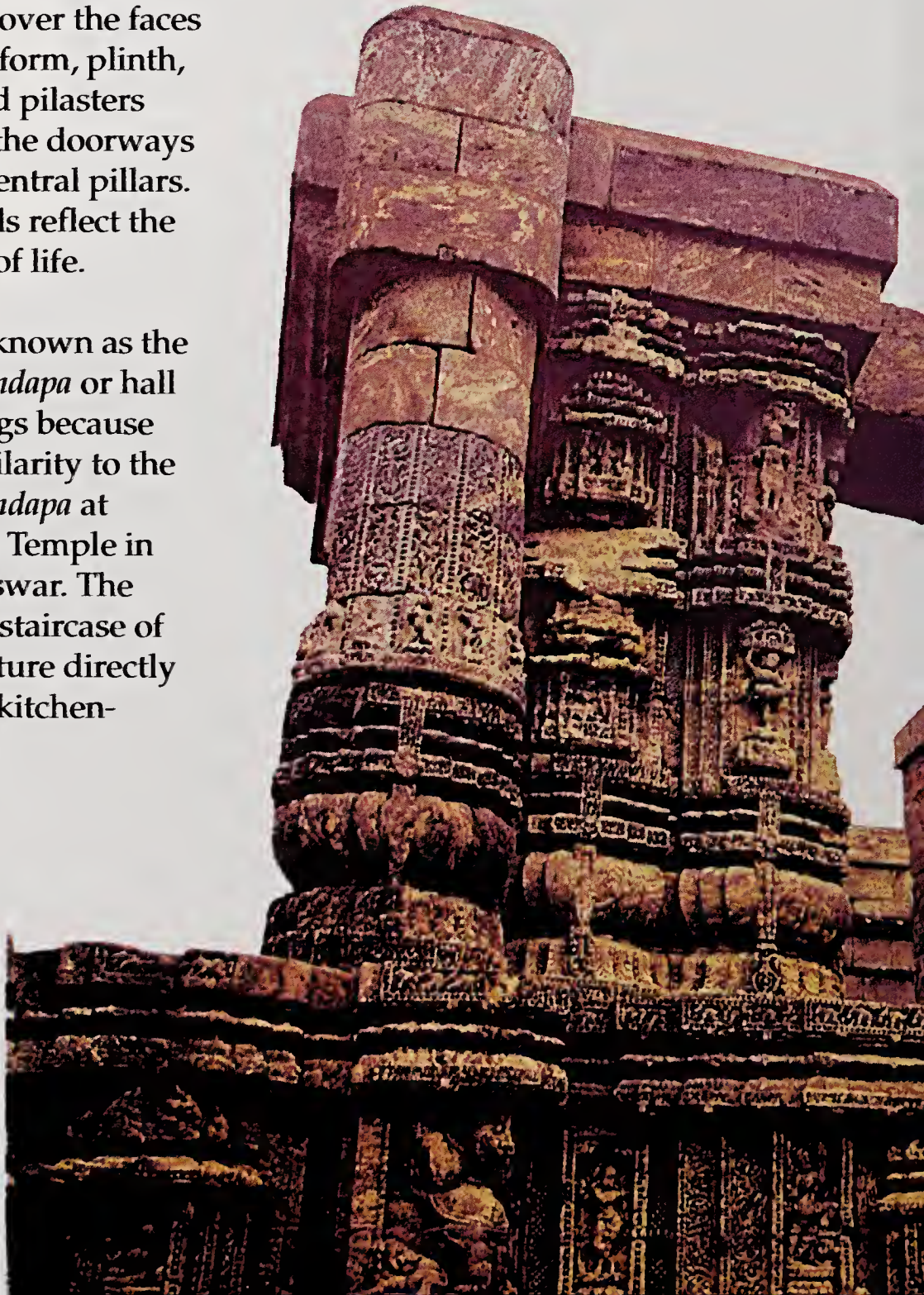
Rendered with life-like realism, the elephants and horses, seem to pulsate with life. The sculptures display consummate workmanship. The western horse with a bejewelled rider (now headless) is better preserved. A quiver full of arrows and a scabbard for a sword hang down his back. Two fierce figures are positioned below the horse, one beneath the latter's body and the other nearly crushed under its hoofs.

Bhoga-mandapa

In front of the eastern flight of the porch, but beyond the sites of the lions-on-elephants and Aruna *stambha*, is a pillared hall on a high platform. This detached structure is generally believed to be a *nata-mandapa* (festive hall), because of the carnival of dance and music chiselled over the faces of its platform, plinth, walls, and pilasters flanking the doorways and the central pillars. The panels reflect the rhythms of life.

It is also known as the *bhoga-mandapa* or hall of offerings because of its similarity to the *bhoga-mandapa* at Lingaraja Temple in Bhubaneswar. The southern staircase of this structure directly faces the kitchen-entrance.

On the face of the *bhoga-mandapa* **platform** are carved rows of *khakhara-mundis*. In their niches are sculpted figures, mostly of women and erotic couples, while the two pilasters on either side of the *khakhara-mundis*, each have a female figure. These women are portrayed in a variety of poses:



Above:
The *bhoga-mandapa* is also known as the *nata-mandapa* on account of the dancers and musicians carved on its walls and pillars

with their arms raised over the head, holding the branch of a tree or a flower, caressing a pet bird, fondling a child, or wringing water from wet hair (the drops falling from it being drunk by a goose). Some of the niches near the corners contain seated *dikpalas*, guardians of the directions, while others have images of deities or even of elephants. Higher up the platform wall is a row of geese, and another of an army of infantry, cavalry, elephants and palanquin-bearers.

The top of the *bhoga-mandapa* platform is approached by a flight of **stairs**. The façade of the parapets of the eastern stairway was left uncarved, while the western stairs cover a part of the sculptured façade of the platform. The individual steps of the northern staircase are in the form of moonstones.

Over the platform is the **plinth** of the *bhoga-mandapa*. Its façade, with multiple projections, has three horizontal divisions.

Left:
The heavily carved pillars of the *bhoga-mandapa*

The recessed part between two divisions has *khakhara-mundis* with figures in their niches, lions rampant on elephants and oblong niches with *kanyas*. A short inscription is seen below the floral foot-stand of a male musician.

The layout of the ***bada*** of the *bhoga-mandapa* is like that of the platform. Here the *khakhara-mundis* contain the eight *dikpalas* in their respective directions. The female counterparts of the *dikpalas* are extant in the niches of the *pidha-mundis* of the upper levels.

In the central part of the floor are **four large pillars**, arranged in a square. The central facets of the pillars have musicians, dancers, devotees, *chamara*-bearers and *kanyas*. The recesses have lions rampant on elephants.

Below:
The *bhoga-mandapa* is a large pillared hall, now without a roof

The missing **roof** of the *bhoga-mandapa* was possibly of the *pidha* type. A beautifully carved stone, which probably formed the crowning piece of a ceiling was found beside the *bhoga-mandapa* and presumably belonged to this structure; this now lies in the ASI Museum.

The motif on this stone is conceived in the form of a full-blown lotus. On the projected pericarp presides Surya, with a lotus stalk in each hand, sitting cross-legged on a seat drawn by seven horses. He is attended by a female figure on either side. Around the pericarp are eight petals, beyond which is a circle of 16 petals, each containing a dancer. Most of these dancers also play on musical instruments. Evidently, these figures represent the celestial choristers chanting the eternal glory of the Sun.

Adjoining Monuments

Mayadevi Temple

Mayadevi Temple

To the west of the Main Temple are the remains of another temple, popularly called the temple of **Mayadevi**, believed to have been one of the wives of Surya. But in all probability, the temple was built for Surya, a presumption substantiated by the *parsva-devatas* occupying the niches in the sanctuary.

This temple, which archaeologists refer to as Temple 2, was built earlier than the Main Temple or Temple 1 and was reclaimed from sand as late as the beginning of twentieth century. Consisting of a sanctuary and a porch, it is fronted by a platform and a compound-wall of laterite.

It is uncertain whether an image of Surya was consecrated in it after the erection of the Main Temple, since the pedestal inside the *sanctum* was found empty when the temple was unearthed. However, according to local lore, the missing image, called Ramachandi, is now in worship in a temple 8 kms, from Konarak. It was supposedly removed to its new abode when the Muslims overran the temple complex at Konarak.

In front of the porch is a **platform** with its façade relieved with carved *khakhara-mundis* alternating with *vajra mundis*. The niches of the former contain mostly erotic and amorous figures. However, the two *khakhara-mundis* on the front façade of the platform each contain a fierce-looking *dvarapala* or doorkeeper leaning on his staff.

Both the sanctuary and the porch are built on a ***pishta*** or platform. The face of the platform is ornately decorated with scroll-work and lotus-petals, and with motifs of cavaliers, elephant-riders, foot-soldiers, musicians, dancers, etc. The washings from the interior of the porch were carried through a channel cut partly into the floor of the platform. At the outer end of the drain is a chlorite gargoyle shaped like the head of a crocodile with a fish in its mouth.

The *bada* or vertical wall of the porch is *sapta-ratha* on plan. The extant portion of the *raha* has an elaborately carved balustraded window.

The **inner walls of the porch** have *pabhaga* mouldings. Over each moulding is a figure of a young woman on a lotus within a richly carved and framed niche. The northern corbelled niche has a frieze of elephants without riders, cavaliers and infantry. At the junction **between the**

Below:
North face of Mayadevi Temple

porch and sanctuary, in the lower *jangha*, is an image of Surya, standing on his horse-drawn chariot.

Sapta-ratha on plan, the ***bada* of the sanctuary** in all likelihood had five divisions, of which only the two lower parts are extant. On the western side, there is an interesting niche with a six-armed bejeweled Nataraja. The two attendants of the god are depicted in a dancing pose, while his bull is shown looking towards him. On the northern side, placed against the top moulding of the platform is a chlorite gargoyle used for draining excess water.

The niches of the lower *jangha* contained *dikpalas*, the guardians of the eight quarters. However, only the image of Agni is extant in the south-eastern corner. The bearded and pot-bellied deity, depicted with a bowl of flames in his left hand and a rosary in the right, is seated on his mount, a goat.

In the niches of the middle segment of the temple were the chlorite images of ***parsva-devatas***, of which those on the north and south sides are now *in situ*. The mutilated image in the southern niche represents Surya.

The sill of the **door-frame** is of chlorite, while the jambs are made of khondalite.

The three **inner walls** of the sanctum each have a central recess. The khondalite figure (in relief) of Surya currently inside the sanctum, was probably in one of the outer niches of this temple.

Near the steps leading to the platform were found fragments of two khondalite **architraves** (now in the Site Museum). In front of the platform, a few metres away, is a small laterite block of masonry probably a part of the core of the platform that once supported the ***dhvaja-stambha***.

Vaishnava Temple

In 1956, a small temple, was discovered to the south-west of the Mayadevi Temple. Facing east, the temple, constructed of large bricks, comprises a sanctuary and a porch, *pancha-ratha* on plan, but with the super-structure of both missing. The temple, also called Temple 3 has Vaishnava affiliation and this irrefutably proves that the worship of deities other than Surya was conducted within the Sun Temple enclosure.

In the lower portion of the *raha*, above the *pabhaga*, is a window with three sandstone balusters. The ceiling of the **porch** is spanned by corbels, of which the lowest two are extant.

Similar on plan to the porch, the *bada* of the **sanctuary** has five-fold vertical divisions. Both the *janghas* are plain, the three *rahas*, however, have an oblong niche each for a *parsva-devata*. Two ***parsva-devatas***, made of chlorite, were *in situ* at the time the temple was unearthed, and are now in the Site Museum. The *parsva-devata* image found in the southern niche is of Vishnu in the Varaha or boar incarnation.

The corresponding image in the northern niche depicts the four-armed Trivikrama. The western niche which was found empty, evidently contained Narasimha,

the third *parsva-devata* usually associated with Vaishnava temples.

The khondalite door-frame of the *sanctum* is intact. At the base of the southern and northern jambs are Ganga and Yamuna on their respective mounts.

In the **interior** of the sanctuary, against the back wall, extending from south to north, is a brick pedestal covered with thick plaster, which is *tri-ratha* on plan. The pedestal was found empty when the temple was unearthed. Archaeologist Debala Mitra believes that an image of Vishnu found in 1906-07 while clearing the debris around Temple 1 might have been one of the images on this pedestal. This lavishly decorated figure of Vishnu, an exquisite piece of Orissan art is now in the National Museum, New Delhi.

Below:
The Sun Temple as it was half a century ago

Above:
Subsidiary structures in the Sun Temple complex

Subsidiary Structures

There are several subsidiary structures in the Sun Temple enclosure, which have, with the passage of time, been reduced to their plinths.

To the south of the *bhoga-mandapa* is a laterite structure which, served as a **kitchen** for the cooking of the *bhoga* or food offering. With a central oblong courtyard, the structure is roughly of the *chatuh-sala* type. The south and north wings have three rows of pillars and the west a single row near the inner edge. In the southern wing there is an oblong platform of khondalite slabs with a raised rim and two channels. The platform evidently served as the place where the cooks used to strain off the gruel from rice after cooking.

There is a well attached to the kitchen. When the well was cleared a small chlorite image of the four-armed Ganesa was found, displayed now in the local ASI Museum.

North of the well is an oblong plinth of a six-pillared *mandapa*, referred to as **Structure 1**. The pillars, in two rows, are of khondalite.

To the west of the well, near the north-western corner of the kitchen, is an oblong structure of laterite on a platform. The platform, referred to as **Structure 2**, has a *khura* at the base and an inverted *khura* at the top. The enitre structure was originally plastered.

To the north of Structure 2 is a small *mandapa*, composed of khondalite and laterite, called **Structure 3**.

North of this, are ruins of two *pancha-ratha* structures, referred to as **Structures 4** and **5**. Immediately to the north of these lies the oblong plinth of a fairly large *mandapa*, known as **Structure 6**, made of khondalite. Pillars supported the roof of the *mandapa* that probably served as a resting-place for pilgrims and devotees.

To the west of Structure 6 is a second well, its inner facing and the parapet made of laterite masonry. The well was probably intended for the visitors to the temple. Immediately to the west and south-west of this well is the plinth of an oblong structure, **Structure 7**.

The temples, structures and wells described above are surrounded by a high compound-wall. The finds of some stone battlements near the debris of the wall suggest that the enclosure had, as in the Jagannatha Temple of Puri, a battlemented top. The enclosure was made mostly of khondalite and partly of laterite and bricks. The brickwork, which had decayed, has been replaced by stonework during repairs.

The enclosure wall is pierced with two small gateways, one facing the *bhoga-mandapa* and the other the southern staircase of the porch of Temple 1. The former was probably the main entrance.

Other Important Monuments in Orissa

Orissa has the rare distinction of having varieties of archaeological monuments almost from the dawn of the historical period (third century BC) down to the end of the Hindu rule, illustrating the growth of artistic styles and structural traditions over a period of fifteen centuries.

The most outstanding monuments include the sculpted figure of an elephant and the Asokan inscriptions on the rock at **Dhauli** the rock-cut caves of **Udayagiri** and **Khandagiri**; some of the temples of **Bhubaneswar**; the shrine-complex of Lord **Jagannatha** at Puri; and the **Sun Temple** at **Konarak**.

At Dhauli, near Bhubaneswar, and Jaugada in Ganjam district are preserved the earliest inscribed records of the Mauryan ruler, Asoka (272-236 BC), besides a rock-cut sculpture of the front of an elephant at Dhauli. Asokan epigraphs indicate that after the conquest of Kalinga (Orissa) and the consequent carnage, Asoka was overcome by deep remorse. He thereafter involved himself in the welfare of his subjects and preached the Dharma (piety and righteousness) through his inscribed messages and other measures.

During the second-first centuries BC, under the Chedi kings of the Mahameghavahana house, Kalinga once again became an independent kingdom with its capital at Kalinganagara, represented probably by the ruined fortified site of Sisupalgarh near Bhubaneswar.

The most powerful Mahameghavahana ruler was Kharvela,

who carried out extensive conquests in the south-west and north of Orissa. He was a devout Jaina and a patron of art and architecture.

It was under the patronage of the Chedi kings that the rock-cut caves of Udayagiri and Khandagiri were brought into being for the use of Jaina monks.

The history of Kalinga following Kharvela and preceding the rise of the Sailodbhavas around the seventh century AD is extremely obscure. However, excavation at Sisupalgarh revealed that it was under occupation till the fourth century AD. Although there is no evidence to show whether Orissa was ever under Gupta rule, some architectural and sculptural fragments found here stylistically indicate the use of the Gupta art idiom. Yet it is difficult to date them in a precise manner. According to available literary and epigraphical evidence, some parts of Orissa were conquered by the famous Gauda (Bengal) king, Sasanka, in the early seventh century AD. However, under the Sailodbhavas Orissa soon regained independence.

Between the seventh and the thirteenth centuries AD, Orissa developed its own style of temple architecture, represented by scores of shrines built during the reigns of the Sailodbhavas, Bhaumakaras, Somavamsis and the Gangas.

Below:
A rock-cut sculpture of an elephant at Dhauli

Dhauli

Asoka's bid to overrun Kalinga in resulted in untold horrors – thousands were killed and taken captive, and many more died in the famine and epidemic that followed the battle.

The perpetrator of this terrible war, Asoka, was racked with remorse at the bloodshed he had caused and converted to Buddhism. He renounced his path of *dig-vijaya* or military conquest in favour of *dharma-vijaya* or spiritual victory.

One of Asoka's inscriptions in the ancient Brahmi script still stands beside the road at the foot of Dhauli hill, about 6 kms south-west of Bhubaneswar.

Directly above the inscription is a life-like frontal view of an elephant, carved out of the hill rock. The sculpture symbolises the birth of the Buddha, represented here as *Gajottamah*. It was probably placed here as a prominent marker for the inscription.

Through this inscriptional edict, Asoka enjoins his administrators to rule his subjects with gentleness and fairness. 'You are in charge of many thousand living beings…all men are my children and as I desire my children that they obtain welfare and happiness both in this world and next, the same do I desire for all men'.

The white Buddhist stupa, known as Vishwa Shanti Stupa, stands at the top of Dhauli hill, and is visible for miles around. It was built in the early 1970s by the Japan Buddha Sangha and the Kalinga Nippon Buddha Sangha.

Udayagiri and Khandagiri Caves

The twin hills of Udayagiri and Khandagiri, close to Bhubaneswar, rise abruptly from a wide expanse of arid, laterite land. Centuries ago, these hills were home to Jaina ascetics who lived in these rock-cut caves, called *lena* in the inscriptions.

Formed of coarse-grained sandstone, these hills, although easy to excavate, are intrinsically unsuitable for fine carvings. So, unlike the Buddhist rock-cut caves of the Deccan, the Udayagiri and Khandagiri caves are austerely plain, the only relief being provided by façades and brackets embellished with carvings. A fully

Left:
Simha Dvar, the main entrance of Jagannatha Temple, with the pillar of Aruna in the foreground

developed monastery here comprised one or more cells, fronted by a common verandah.

Some of the best sculpture at Udayagiri can be seen on the pillars and arches of Cave 1, also known as Rani Gumpha. It is the largest and most beautiful of these caves. Its lavishly sculptured friezes are unique among contemporary rock-cut caves.

Other caves of interest are Cave 10 or Ganesa Gumpha, Cave 12 or Bagha Gumpha, and Cave 14 or Hathi Gumpha. This last cave has a long inscription giving the life history of King Kharavela.

In Khandagiri, Cave 3 or Ananta Gumpha, bears a *nandipada* on the rear wall. Cave 7 or Navamuni Gumpha is named for the nine *tirthankaras* carved on the rear and right walls.

Jagannatha Temple

The eleventh century Jagannatha Temple at Puri, 64 kms from Bhubaneswar, is one of the most sacred pilgrimages in India.

Brahma Purana regards it the highest of all *tirthas*, and it is popularly believed that 'by visiting this place one can achieve the maximum reward with minimum effort'.

The temple is dedicated to Vishnu as Jagannatha, Balbhadra and Subhadra, represented by three wooden images. According to a local belief, the Sabaras, a tribal people, originally worshipped Jagannatha under the name of Nilamadhava, and made images of red tree-trunks. This deity was later adapted by the Brahmanical Hindus. The highly-stylised images of wood are worshipped and renewed at regular intervals. The area of the temple is known as Purushottamkshetra.

The 8th century savant Sankaracharya also established a *math* here. The 15th century Vaishnava saint from Bengal, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, spent many years at Puri.

Jagannatha Temple is not only the largest but also the tallest surviving shrine in Orissa and its *rekha deul* soars to an incredible 63 metres. It stands on an 8-metre elevated mound known as Nila Parvata, and has four gateways, the massive Simha Dvar being the main entrance.

Built on the same architectural principle as the Lingaraja Temple at Bhubaneswar, it consists of four edifices in one alignment – the *rekha deul, jagamohana* and the later additions of the *nata* and *bhoga-mandapas*. However, the carvings on the temple structure are nowhere as exquisite as those on the latter. The tower of the *deul* presents a commanding appearance, acting as a landmark across the low-lying country around.

For centuries, the entire edifice was plastered over and the temple was known as the 'white pagoda' due to the thick coat of lime plaster that encrusted it.

Bhubaneswar

Bhubaneswar, the capital of Orissa, is a town studded with temples and tanks, with the majestic Lingaraja Temple dominating its skyline.

The area close to Bhubaneswar first appears in history as far back as the third century BC as the ancient capital of Kalinga. However, it was during the first quarter of the seventh century AD that this region,

now known as Ekamrakshetra, reached new political and economic heights.

The prosperity of the region got expressed in its religious architecture, and temple-building reached new heights between the seventh and twelfth centuries, when thousands of sandstone temples were constructed.

The temples of Bhubaneswar, built over a span of more than five hundred years, can be resolved into three stylistic groups, viz., *Rekha*, *Pidha* and *Khakhara* orders. Of these, the following are significant: Of the Early Period (*c.* seventh to ninth century AD), the Parasuramesvara and Vaital Deul are prime examples; the Middle Period (*c.* tenth and eleventh century) includes temples such as the Muktesvara, the Rajarani and the Lingaraja; and the Later Period (*c.* twelfth and thirteenth century) when temples including the Ananta Vasudeva, the Meghesvara and the Yamesvara were constructed.

Right:
Entrance to Lingaraja Temple

Parasuramesvara is considered the oldest of the Bhubaneswar temples. This small, lavishly-decorated seventh century temple consists of a sanctuary or a *deul*,and its pillared hall or *jagamohana*. The *deul*, facing west, is a small compact shrine, with a squattish, thick-set *gandi* or curvilinear spire. It has no platform and is *tri-ratha* in plan.

The *jagamohana*, instead of being a stepped pyramid atop a cube, is a rectangular structure with a terraced roof sloping in two stages.

The recurring motif on Parasuramesvara Temple is the highly ornate *chaitya* window, often filled in with animal, human and divine figures.

Vaital Deul was erected later than the Parasuramesvara and is so different in conception that it seems to derive from an entirely different tradition. The sanctuary tower, with its wagon vault roof, bears an affinity to the Dravidian *gopuram*, while the general architectural treatment seems more Indo-Aryan.

Below:
Parasuramesvara Temple

Above:
Vaital Deul is popularly known as Tri-mundi. Note the *chaitya*-window motif with figures of dancing Siva and Surya

Vaital Deul is a Sakta shrine. Its *jagamohana* is a rectangular structure, but embedded in each angle is a small supplementary shrine. The *deul* has a semi-cylindrical roof and the pleasing proportions of its tower denote a highly-trained aesthetic sensibility.

The sculpted figures of the Vaital Deul are characterised by a soft plasticity of modelling and delicacy of features. The image enshrined in the *sanctum* is the eight-armed goddess, Chamunda.

Muktesvara Temple has been acclaimed as the 'gem of Orissan architecture'. The symmetrical design and execution of its architectural elements are a considerable advance over the Parasuramesvara and Vaital Deul temples. The *jagamohana* of this ninth century temple is also remarkable for the sculptural treatment of its interiors, a rare feature in Orissan temples.

Of special interest is the *torana* archway in front of the *jagamohana*; it is a detached portal consisting of two pillars supporting an arch within a semi-circular shaped pediment. The decoration on the arch, with exquisite reclining females and bands of delicate scroll-work of masterly execution, is the crowning beauty of the monument.

Siddhesvara Temple shares the enclosure with the Muktesvara and is situated to its north-west. The emergence of the Orissan architectural order is almost complete in this little temple.

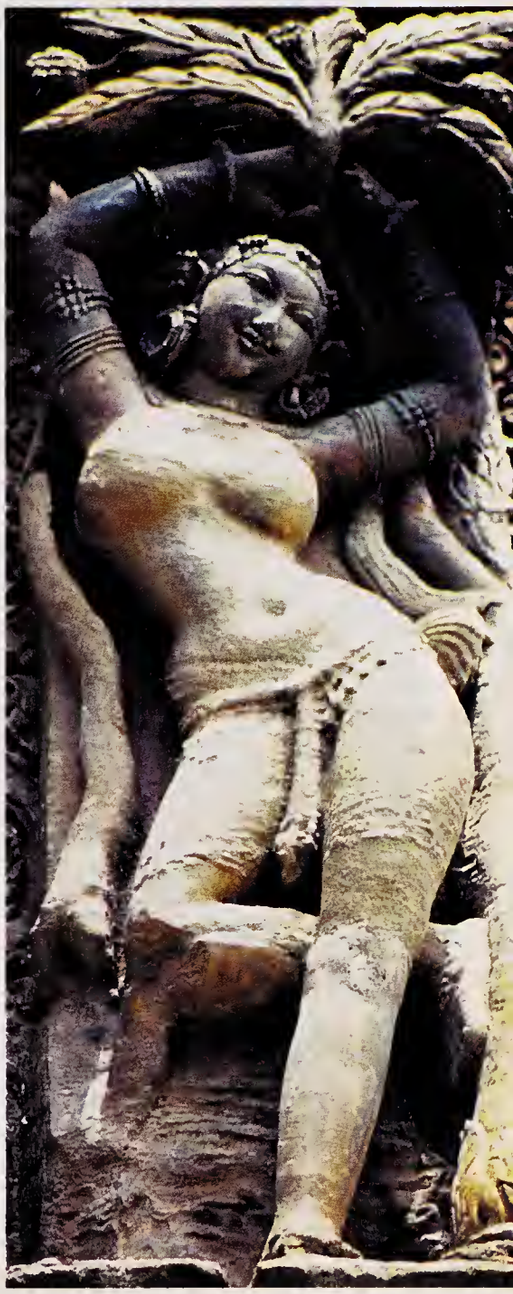
There are at least a dozen temples at Bhubaneswar that represent the later period of Orissa temple architecture (AD 1100-1250).

Rajarani Temple, arguably the most elegant and graceful of all the Bhubaneswar temples is today picturesquely set in beautifully manicured lawns. What strikes the visitor is the cluster of miniature *rekhas* around the *gandi*, reminiscent of the temples of Khajuraho. The temple, datable roughly to the early eleventh century, has a square sanctuary. However, its interior and exterior surfaces are so recessed that it appears circular.

The *deul* is placed diagonal to the *jagamohana*, which is meant to add variety and contrast in the elevational appearance of the structure.

The name 'Rajarani' stems from the local name for the sandstone used to build it – *rajrania*. The temple is also famous for the tall and slender, sophisticated *nayikas* carved in high relief and depicted in various roles and moods.

In marked contrast are the sturdy *dikpalas* or guardians of the eight directions carved around the shrine. The temple is now without a deity but its strong Saiva associations are apparent from the figures of Nataraja and Parvati on the platform and Saiva door-keepers.



Left:
Niche with Ganesa image on Siddhesvara Temple

Right:
A *sala-bhanjika* or tree-nymph on the walls of Rajarani Temple

Lingaraja or the Great Temple, dating from the eleventh century, seems to embody the crystallised experience of several centuries of Orissan temple building. One of the most refined manifestations of temple architecture, the panoply of Orissan decorative motifs is seen here.

An inscription on the wall of the *jagamohana* dated AD 1114-15 refers to a grant of a village for Kirttivasas Temple.

Below:
A Varaha statue on the walls of the Narasimha shrine in the compound of Lingaraja Temple

The temple occupies the centre of a large quadrangular enclosure measuring 162.5 metres by 145.3 metres and is surrounded by a high wall. The enclosure also houses many subsidiary shrines grouped around the main temple, constructed no doubt by fervent devotees.

The Lingaraja consists of the customary four structures – the *deul* called the Sri Mandir; *jagamohana* or the hall of congregation; *nata mandapa* or the dancing hall; and *bhoga-mandapa* or the hall of offerings. All these buildings are disposed on the same axis but do not necessarily belong to the same period. The *jagamohana*, which was built at the same time as the tower over the *deul*, is not square but oblong and its *bada* is 10.6 metres high.

Above this rises the roof in the shape of a pyramid – the lower part is square and stepped and the upper round and fluted. The whole soars to a height of 31.2 metres. The *nata* and *bhoga-mandapas* are in the same style as the *jagamohana*. The interior walls are devoid of ornamentation. Both the *nata* and *bhoga-mandapas* have a group of four massive piers in the centre to support the solid mass of the roof and these have sculpted patterns on their shafts.

On the outer walls, however, the artist has excelled himself with

compositions of an intricate nature; the fertility of invention and variety of patterns are quite astonishing. The sculptures blend effortlessly with the line-curves of the temple and enhance the effect of the latter.

The crowning glory of the Lingaraja is unmistakably the great tower of Sri Mandir that dominates not only the temple but also the town of Bhubaneswar.

Constructed of soft sandstone, **Yamesvara Temple**, belonging to the final phase of Bhubaneswar temples, has seen a great deal of erosion.

The non-functional, balustraded windows of the *jagamohana* were once richly carved. The pilasters below this window are relieved with intricately carved *naga* and *nagi* figures.

Below:
***Jagamohana* of Lingaraja Temple**

Arriving in India

When to come to India

The best time to come to India is between October and March and especially so for the tourist heading for Konarak. The summer months in Orissa on the eastern coast are hot and extremely humid. The monsoons break at the end of June and the deluge from the skies makes travel near impossible for the next three months.

The winter months are more salubrious, with the temperature hovering around the 20° C mark. However, regardless of when you go, carry an umbrella with you as sea breeze often brings along unexpected drizzles.

Before coming to India

There are a few things you need to take care of before travelling to India.

Visa: There are three kinds of visas for tourists.

1. The 15-day single/ double-entry transit visa. This visa is valid for 30 days from the date of its issue.

2. The three-month multiple-entry visa. This visa is valid for 90 days from the date of first entry into India, which must be within 30 days from the date of its issue.

3. The six-month multiple-entry visa. This visa is valid for 180 days from the date of its issue, not from the date of entry into India.

Visa Extension: It is virtually impossible to get the 15-day or three-month visa extended. Only the six-month tourist visa can be extended. It can be quite a bother to extend it beyond a 15-day period. Avoid it unless there is an emergency.

A 15-day extension on the six-month visa is issued by the Foreigners' Regional Registration Office (FRRO) at any of the four metros: Chennai, Kolkata, Mumbai and New Delhi. The FRRO office is open on weekdays, 9.30 am to 1.30 pm and 2 pm to 4 pm. Usually a 15-day extension is given only if confirmed air tickets are not available. No fee is charged.

- **Chennai: FRRO**
  Shastri Bhawan Annexe
  26 Haddows Road
  Nungambakkam
  Ph (044) 28240338
- **Kolkata: FRRO**
  237 A J C Bose Road
  Ph (033) 22470549
- **Mumbai: FRRO**
  Annexe-II
  Crawford Market
  (near Police Commissioner's Office)
  Ph (022) 22621169
- **New Delhi: FRRO**
  East Block 8, Level-II
  Sector-I, R K Puram
  Ph (011) 26711074

Health

Your health during your travel in India depends on three things: Precautions taken before arrival, day-to-day health care, and efficiency in tackling emergencies.

For travel health, use your common sense and most importantly carry your own first-aid kit, after consulting a doctor. Especially take care of what you eat or drink. This is the most important health rule. Water is suspect; therefore, it is best to carry your own bottled water. The tropical sun is extremely strong during the summer months, so guard against sun-stroke and dehydration. Wear a hat and dark glasses when you go out and drink lots of liquids.

Hospitals

Indian cities have government as well as privately-run hospitals and nursing homes. The government hospitals have modern facilities, but due to a large turnout of patients, medical assistance is slow.

Arriving in India by Air

NEW DELHI

STD Code 011

As the capital of India, Delhi not only has a well-serviced international airport but is also the obvious point from where to make connections for most parts of the country. Delhi airport is called the Indira Gandhi International Airport. It has two terminals:

Terminal 1 (Domestic)
Terminal 2 (International).

The two terminals are 7 kms away from each other. Terminal 2 is 19 kms from the city centre at Connaught Place.

Airlines Offices

Indian Airlines
City Office Ph 23310517
Airport Ph 25675121

Jet Airways
City Office Ph 23321241
Airport Ph 25675404

Sahara India Airlines
City Office Ph 23326851
Airport Ph 25675234

Air India
City Office Ph 23731225
Airport Ph 25696621

Airport Enquiry

Domestic Terminal
Ph 25675121/25675126

International Terminal
Ph 25652011/25652021

KOLKATA

STD Code 033

Kolkata is the most convenient international airport for an international traveller heading for Konarak. The Kolkata airport is called Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Airport, and is 22 kms from the city centre. It has two terminals, international and domestic located in the same building.

Airport Enquiry

Domestic Terminal
Ph 25119637

International Terminal
Ph 25118787

Airlines Offices

Indian Airlines
Airlines House
39 Chittaranjan Avenue
City Office Ph 22113135
Airport Ph 25119433

Jet Airways
Stephen Court
18 D Park Street
City Office Ph 22292227
Airport Ph 25119894-5

Sahara India Airlines
Sahara India Sadan
2 A Shakespeare Sarani
City Office Ph 22407098
Airport Ph 25119545

Air India
50 Chowringhee
City Office Ph 22826012
Airport Ph 25529685

For timings and current status of flights you can log onto:

www.indianairlines.nic.in
www.airindia.com
www.jetairways.com
www.airsahara.net

Tourist Information Offices

Govt of India Tourist Office
4 Shakespeare Sarani
Ph 22421402/22421475

Orissa Tourism
Utkal Bhawan
55 Lenin Sarani
Ph 22443653

By Rail

The Indian Railways run a gigantic, modern and organised network that connects the metros to most major and minor destinations within India. Trains in India are very crowded and it is necessary to reserve a seat or a berth to travel in any degree of comfort. Train tickets must be bought before you enter the train. You will be penalised if you do not have one and intend to buy it on board.

Railway Enquiry
Ph 131, 1330, 1335, 1345

Local Travel

There are pre-paid service counters for taxis and auto-rickshaws at most airports and railway stations in large cities. Buses are also available but are likely to be crowded and first-timers to India are advised to avoid them, especially if they have luggage. For travelling within the city you can engage a local taxi, easily available at all hotels and taxi stands.

Taxis and auto-rickshaws in the smaller cities are not metered and it is best to fix the rate beforehand, and to bargain. There are also several international and local companies that operate car rental services in major Indian cities. For self-driven cars, the petrol cost is to be borne by the customer. A valid driving license, passport (for foreigners) or proof of address is required along with a security deposit.

Money

Credit Cards

Credit cards are becoming increasingly popular in urban areas. All major international credit cards are used, Visa, Amex, Mastercard.

Banks

Banks are open from 10 am to 2 pm, from Monday to Friday and 10 am to 12 pm Saturdays. Banks are closed on Sundays and national holidays. Most international

banks have several branches in the metros and 24-hour ATM centres have mushroomed in most large cities, facilitating easy withdrawal of money.

Communications

Telephone

Yellow-painted STD/ISD booths can be found in almost every small town or village today. Most telephone booths remain open till midnight. Some of these also have facilities for sending and receiving fax messages.

Pre-paid Telephone Cards

The state-run MTNL offers facilities for buying pre-paid STD/ISD cards, which the consumer can use to make long-distance calls from any phone. Cell-phone users can also buy pre-paid SIM cards from local network service providers to enable them to use their mobile phones in most Indian cities.

E-mail

Internet and e-mail connections are easily available from anywhere in India. All major towns and cities have innumerable cybercafes, from where you can access the Internet.

STD Codes	
Bhubaneswar	0674
Kolkata	033
Konarak	06758
New Delhi	011
Puri	06752

Getting to Konarak

Konarak is a nondescript village on the Orissa coast. Famed for its magnificent Sun Temple, it is a popular tourist destination and, together with temple-studded Bhubaneswar and the holy town of Puri, today comprises the Golden Triangle of Orissa. The gateway to Konarak, in fact, is the state capital of Bhubaneswar, which is well connected to the rest of the country by air and by rail.

BHUBANESWAR

STD Code 0674

By Air

Bhubaneswar is the nearest airport for Konarak, 62 kms away. The Biju Patnaik Airport is 4 kms from the centre of town, and there are daily flights connecting Bhubaneswar to Kolkata and Delhi. Pre-paid taxis and auto-rickshaws are easily available to get to town.

Indian Airlines
City Office Ph 2532019
Airport Ph 2535731

Jet Airways
Airport Ph 2535877 / 910

By Rail

Bhubaneswar is well-connected to Kolkata and Delhi by train and is also linked to Puri, the closest railway station for Konarak.

By Road

Buses for Puri (65 kms) and Konarak (62 kms) leave from the Baramunda Bus Station.

Sight-seeing in Bhubaneswar

Most of the important temples are in the south of the city, where the local *rickshawallah* will transport you cheerfully. Alternately, one can hire an auto-rickshaw from the city centre for about two-three hours and do the rounds of the temples, although the ride maybe a little bumpy. The temples are open to non-Hindus, with the exception of Lingaraja.

Guided Tours

The Orissa Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC) conducts tours around Bhubaneswar and to Puri and Konarak; the latter takes in a 20-minute stopover at Pipli. Contact : Ph 2431299, 2534006

Tourist Offices

Orissa Tourism
Paryatan Bhawan
Ph 2432177 Fax 2430887

OTDC
City Office Ph 2431299
Airport Ph 2534006

Government of India Tourist Office
Ph 2432203

Lost Articles

In case of loss or theft, especially passports, etc., an FIR (First Information Report) must be filed at the Police Station nearest to the place where the loss has occured.

Where to Stay

Price Range in rupees for a standard double room

- A Above 6,000
- B 4,000-6,000
- C 2,500-4,000
- D 1,500-2,500
- E Below 1,500

A Oberoi Bhubaneswar
Naya Palli
Ph 2440890 **Fax** 2440898

A Swosti Plaza
Jaydev Vihar
Ph 2585790 **Fax** 2585071

B Garden Inn
Janpath
Ph 2505120 **Fax** 2504254

B Swosti
4103 Janpath
Ph 2585790 **Fax** 2585071

C Kalinga Ashok (ITDC)
Gautam Nagar
Ph 2431055 **Fax** 2432001

C Sishmo
86/A 1 Gautam Nagar
Ph 2433600 **Fax** 2433351

D Keshari
113 Station Square
Ph 2535991 **Fax** 2535553

D Siddhartha
A/19 Cuttack Road
Ph 2575981-85 **Fax** 2575985

E Yatri Niwas
Cuttack Road **Ph** 2416438

E Prachi
6 Janpath
Ph 2502689 **Fax** 2503287

E Panthaniwas (OTDC)
Jayadev Nagar **Ph** 2432515

E Sahara
76 Sudhanagar **Ph** 2417331

E Bhubaneswar
Cuttack Road, **Ph** 2416977

PURI

STD Code 06752

Puri, some 65 kms from Bhubaneswar, is the site of the famous Jagannatha Temple. Hindu mythology calls Puri one of the four *dhams* or holy places, which a devout Hindu must make a pilgrimage to.

The famous Rath Yatra (Car Festival) of Lord Jagannatha takes place during June-July.

The beach at Puri is wide and long and the breakers huge, especially during late summer and the rainy season. Visitors are advised to hire a '*nulya*' (local lifeguard) when going out to swim. The stretch near Swarga Dvar is crowded and dirty but most resorts have private beaches that are clean and well-maintained.

By Train

Puri is the closest railway station to Konarak, 32 kms away. It is extremely well connected to Kolkata, with three daily trains. Regular trains also connect it to Delhi. It is prudent to book train tickets in advance, especially if you are travelling during the festive season when Puri witnesses the maximum tourist inflow.

By Bus

Buses leave the bus station near Gundicha Mandir for Konarak every 20 minutes and make the 32 km-journey in close to an hour.

OTDC
Ph 222562, 222740

Sight-seeing in Puri

Cycle-rickshaws outnumber auto-rickshaws in Puri; take one to Simha Dvar, the main street facing Jagannatha Temple. The road is a permanent fair, with stalls selling little idols, wooden toys, shell artefacts and a myriad handicrafts and handloom items.

Where to Stay

B Hans Coco Palms
Swarga Dwar Gourbari Sahi
Ph 230038 **Fax** 223165

B Mayfair Beach Resort
C T Road
Ph 227800-10 **Fax** 224242

C Nilanchal Ashok (ITDC)
Raj Bhawan, V I P Road
Ph 223651 **Fax** 223671

C S E Railway Hotel (BNR Hotel)
C T Road
Ph 222063 **Telefax** 223005-6

C Vijoya International
C T Road
Ph 223705 **Fax** 222881

D Holiday Resort
Sandy Village, C T Road
Ph 224370 **Fax** 223968

D Toshali Sands Resort
Konarak Marine Drive
Ph 250571, 250588
Fax 250899

E Holiday Inn
C T Road **Ph** 223782

E Panthaniwas (OTDC)
C T Road
Ph 222740, 222562

E Panthabhawan (OTDC)
Marine Parade, **Ph** 223526

E Repose
C T Road, **Ph** 223376

KONARAK

STD Code 06758

The only way to get to Konarak is to drive there, either from Bhubaneswar (62 kms) or from Puri (32 kms). The drive from Puri along the sea-front is a treat for the senses. Buses, as well as private taxis are freely available in Puri; a round trip from Puri to Konarak by hired air-conditioned car costs around Rs 750 and Rs 500 for a non-air-conditioned one.

Where to Stay

E PWD Inspection Bungalow
Ph 235834

E Panthaniwas (OTDC)
Ph 235823

E Travellers' Lodge (OTDC)
Ph 235831

E Yatri Nivas (OTDC)
Ph 235820

Konarak Festival

A famous dance festival is held here in the first week of December every year. It is the best opportunity to see the leading exponents of classical dance perform against the spectacular backdrop of the Sun Temple.

Jagannatha Ratha Yatra at Puri

Once every year, the idols of Jagannatha, his brother Balabhadra and sister Subhadra are all placed on colossal, brightly coloured chariots and pulled by hundreds of devotees through the streets of Puri. This festival takes place in the end of June (in the month of *Jyestha*).

The spectacular procession of the three chariots goes from Jagannatha Temple to Gundicha Temple, 3 kms away. After seven days at Gundicha, the deities are carried back to the Jagannatha Temple.

Raghurajpur

Some 11 kms out of Puri on the road to Bhubaneswar, take a small lane that leads off to the right. This is the way to Raghurajpur, a small crafts village being nurtured by government and heritage organisations.

Almost every house in this village keeps alive the traditional Orissan craft of *patchitra* painting on cloth. Mythological scenes and portraits, as well as pictures of bird and animals are all themes for the artist's imagination.

Pipli

The small town of Pipli, halfway between Bhubaneswar and Puri, is famous for applique work. Geometric motifs and stylised birds, animals and flowers are cut out of brightly coloured cloth and sewn on to dark-coloured backgrounds.

Artists from Pipli have traditionally stitched the chariot covers used in the Jagannatha Rath Yatra, as well as the *chhattris* suspended above the presiding deities in most Orissa temples. Today, the enterprising artists have switched to making wall-hangings, bed-spreads and lamp shades.

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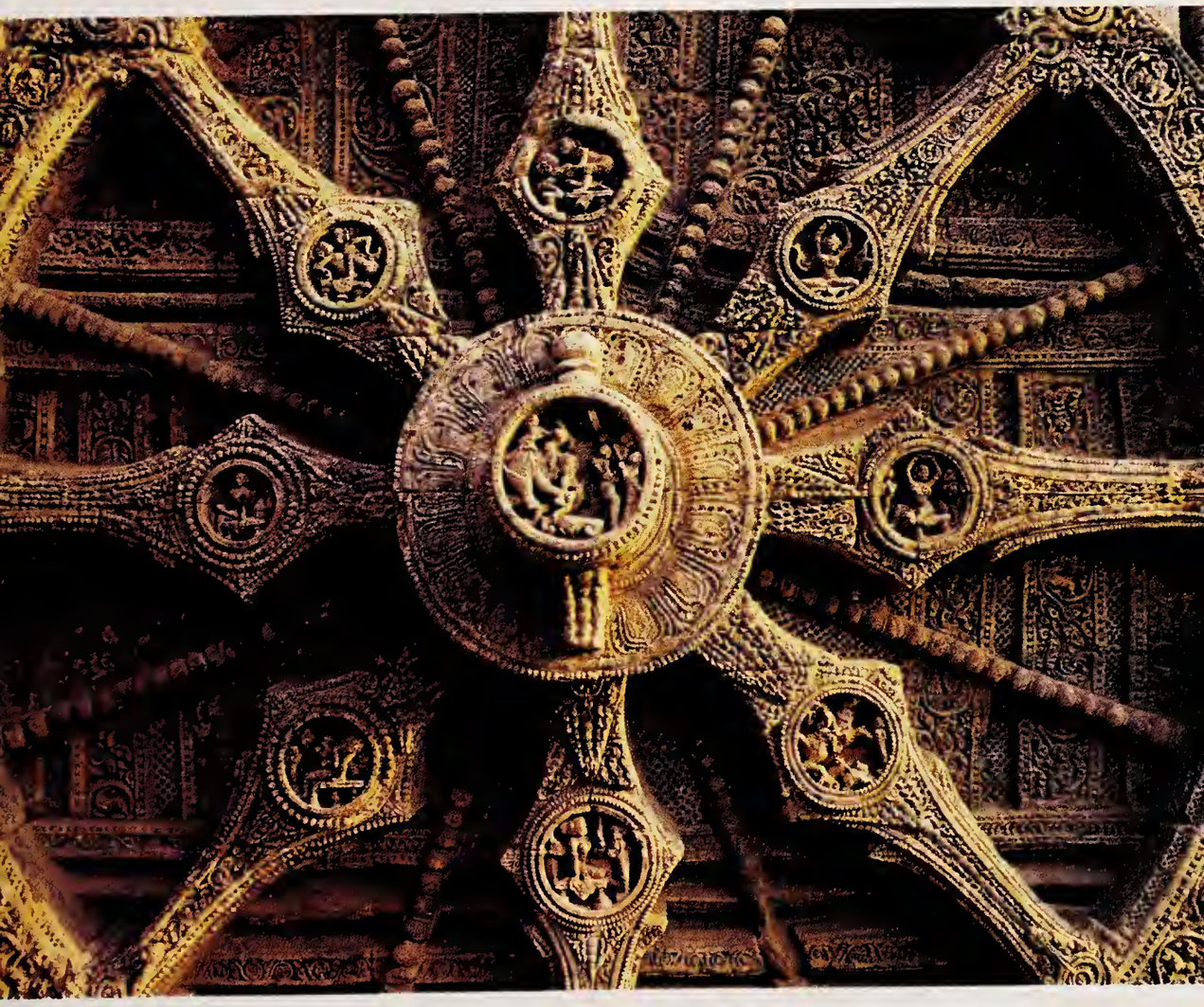

GLOSSARY

alasa-kanya indolent damsel; female figures striking various languid poses, usually on the walls of a temple; also called *nayika*

amla fluted oblate spheroid resembling an *amalaka* fruit, that forms an important component of the crowning elements of a *rekha* or a *pidha* temple

anuraha projection next to the *raha* (central projection) in *sapta-ratha* and *nava-ratha* temples

anuratha projection next to the *kanika-paga* in *pancha-ratha*, *sapta-ratha* and *nava-ratha* temples

architraves the beam or lowest division of the entablature which extends from column to column

bada enclosure; wall; vertical portion of a temple above *pishta* and below spire or roof

bada deul literally big temple, meaning the sanctuary

bandhana bond; moulding (single or multiple) between two *janghas* of a temple

beki/beka neck; cylindrical member immediately above *gandi* and below *amla* of a *rekha* temple and above *gandi* and below *ghanta* of a *pidha* temple

bhadra deul auspicious temple; it refers to the porch in front of a sanctuary

bhoga-mandapa hall of offering

***chaitya*-window** ornamental motif resembling the front window of an apsidal Buddhist *chaitya* hall

chamara fly-whisk, usually made with the tail-hair of a yak

chhajja overhanging eave

coffer sunk panel in a ceiling

corbels blocks of stone projecting from a wall

deul general name for a temple as a whole; when used singly, it refers to the sanctuary as distinguished from the porch or festive hall

dhvaja flag, finial

dhvaja-stambha flagstaff; column with the mount or ensign of a deity as the crowning piece

dikpalas guardians of eight (four cardinal and four intermediate) quarters; they are Indra (east), Agni (south-east), Yama (south), Nirriti (south-west), Varuna (west), Vayu (northwest), Kubera (north) and Isana (north-east)

dvara-pala door-keeper, guard

entablature upper portion of a structure supported by a colonnade

frieze border of the upper portion of a structure supported by a colonnade

gandi literally trunk; curvilinear spire or pyramidal roof above *bada* and below the *mastaka* of a temple

ghanta bell; bell-shaped member in the finial of a *pidha* temple; it is also called *sri*

grahas planetary deities often represented in a group on the architrave above the lintel of a doorway; as *navagrahas*, they are *Ravi* (Sun), *Soma* (Moon), *Mangala* (Mars), *Budha* (Mercury), *Brihaspati*, (Jupiter), *Sukra* (Venus), *Sani* (Saturn), *Rahu* (ascending node), *Ketu* (descending node)

jagamohana hall in front of a sanctuary, usually in a *pidha* temple.

jangha thigh; vertical portion of the *bada* between projecting sets of mouldings; *tala jangha*, the lower one between *pabhaga* and *bandhana* mouldings; *upara jangha*, the upper one between *bandhana* and *varanda* mouldings

kalasa water-pot, pitcher-shaped member in the finial of a temple

kanika*, *kanika-paga corner segment of a temple

***kanthi* (*kanti*)** recess between *pidhas*, mouldings or *patalas*

kanya damsel, female figures in various poses; see also *alasa-kanyas*

khakhara-mundi miniature representation of a *khakhara* temple as an ornamental motif

khapuri skull; flattish bell-shaped member above the *amla* in the finial of a *rekha* or *pidha* temple

makara a fabulous creature with the head of a crocodile and the body of either a fish or beast

kirti-mukha decorative motif showing the grinning face of a lion, from whose mouth often issue beaded tassels

mandapa hall, porch

mastaka head; crowning elements above the *gandi* of a temple

mithunas loving couples

mudra stylised gestures of the hand in Indian art forms, each of which has a symbolic meaning

mundi miniature temple, carved on walls as a decorative motif

naga serpent; fabulous creature with a human bust, serpent-tail and hood over the head; its female counterpart is known as *nagi*

nata-mandapa festive hall

navagrahas nine planetary deities

nayika female figures in various poses and actions

pabhaga division corresponding to foot, a set of mouldings constituting the lowest part of the *bada* of a temple

paga segment

parsva-devata attendant deities, occupying the niches of the central projections of a sanctuary; they vary according to the religious association of the temple; a *Vaishnava* temple generally contains Narasimha, Trivikrama and Varaha, three incarnations of Vishnu; a Surya temple has three forms of Surya

pidha flattish wooden seat; projecting moulding constituting the pyramidal roof of a *pidha* temple

pidha deul temple of which the pyramidal roof is made of *pidhas*; this form of structure is usually limited to the *jagamohana*, *bhoga-mandapa* and *nata-mandapa* in Orissa

pidha-mundi miniature representation of a *pidha* temple as an ornamental motif

pilaster square pillar projecting from wall

pishta platform

potala group of *pidha*

plinth lower portion or base of a building or column

porch structure in front of doorway

Purana collection of ancient legends and ritual practices; dated to the post-Vedic period, they are grouped into *Maha Purana* and *Upa Purana*, each comprising 18 texts

raha middle segment (of a temple) having the greatest projection

rasa sentiment or essence in classical Indian aesthetic theory

ratha segment produced on the outer face of a temple which has been subjected to projection. In a *tri-ratha* temple a central exterior projection (*raha*) divides the wall into three *rathas*, the two on the outer sides being on the same plane and known as *kanika*. Temples with five, seven and nine such *rathas*, the result of the increase in projections on each face, are respectively known as *pancha-ratha*, *sapta-ratha* and *nava-ratha*

rekha deul order of temple characterised by a curvilinear tower which presents the appearance of a continuous line

silpa-sastras ancient Indian treatise on building construction and allied arts

sikhara literally peak; spire of temple

sri also *ghanta*, the bell-shaped member over the *beki* of a *pidha deul*

sringara the sentiment of love between the sexes; one of the nine *rasas* or essences of classical Indian aesthetics;

stambha column

torana gateway in the form of an arch springing from two pillars

upana low plinth of a structure

vajra-mundi variant of *khakhara-mundi* with a highly intricate *chaitya*-window motif on the facade of the roof

varanda (also *baranda*) mouldings forming the topmost element of the *bada* of a temple

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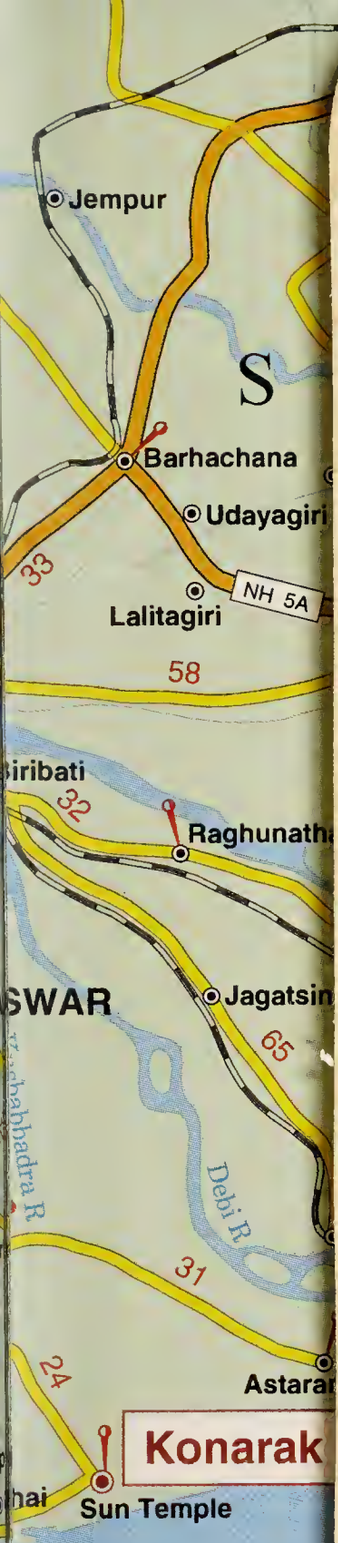

World Heritage Series

KONARAK

The guide to the Sun Temple at Konarak is part of the the World Heritage Series being brought out by the Archaeological Survey of India. The temple, fashioned in the form of the chariot of Surya, the Sun-god, is a truly magnificent monument. The artisans of medieval Orissa embellished the shrine with twelve exquisitely-carved wheels and seven spirited horses, besides an incredible number of sculptures.

There are various explanations offered regarding what led to the collapse of the *rekha deul* or sanctuary at Konarak. The monument we see today is the *jagamohana* or the *pidha deul*, and the pillared *bhoga-mandapa* which is approached by a flight of carved steps. Of the sanctum, only the heavily-carved platform it shares with the *jagamohana* remains to bear testimony to the original glory of the Konarak Sun Temple.

The bas reliefs, bold free-standing images of deities, panels of musicians and numerous nymphs and *salabhanjikas* on the exterior walls of the temple make the monument a rhapsody in stone.

Kasturi Gupta Menon
Director General
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

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